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THE EAST INDIA HOUSE
ITS HISTORY AND ASSOCIATIONS

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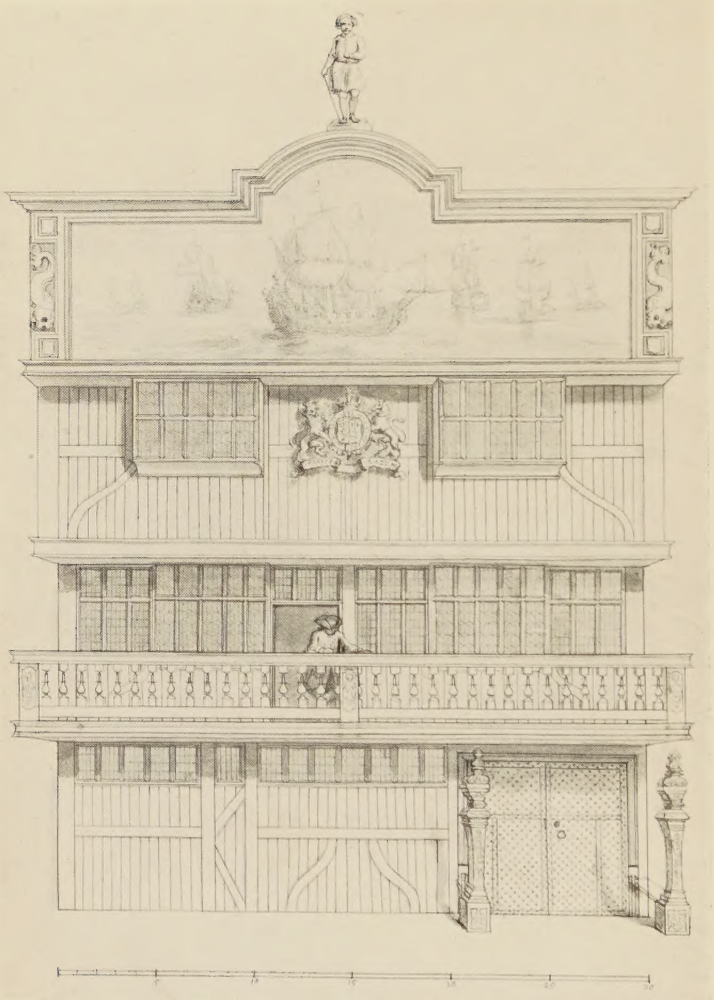

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE, 1711

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE

ITS HISTORY AND ASSOCIATIONS

BY WILLIAM FOSTER, C.I.E.

WITH THIRTY-SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

Oh the highway is a dry way,
And it's weary walking there;
So the byway shall be my way—
Leafy lane and meadow fair.

LONDON
JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

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PREFACE

THERE are still some who like to saunter along the byways of history — paths that lead nowhere in particular, yet have their own quiet attractions. To such the following pages may appeal. Topics of importance they do not pretend to touch, being in fact little more than gossip about the domestic side of the East India Company's long history. If excuse be needed for putting forth these gatherings—the result of a fairly intimate acquaintance, extending over forty years, with the Company's records—it may perhaps be found in the fact that they illustrate the working of a typical trading body in the City of London during two and a half centuries, and that is a subject on which comparatively little is at present known.

A few of the articles have already appeared, though they have since been considerably revised. The account of Lamb's official career was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* as long ago as 1897; the portion of the chapter on 'The Examiner's Department' relating to James Mill has appeared in *The Scottish Historical Review*, and the articles on John Hoole and the Royal East India Volunteers in the *Westminster Review* and the *United Service Magazine* respectively. I am indebted to the editors and proprietors of those periodicals for permission to utilize these portions afresh.

Several of the illustrations are taken, with permission,

from pictures and plans in the India Office. For the two sketches that appear on pp. 53 and 134 I have to thank the proprietors of *The Gentlewoman*; while the view of Hoole's house is reproduced from *The Daily Chronicle* with the sanction of the editor and of the artist, Mr. Ernest Coffin, to whose skilful pencil is also due the illustration of the Du Bois monument. The portrait of James Mill is taken from one in Dr. Bain's biography of him, which Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. have kindly allowed me to copy.

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THE EAST INDIA HOUSE
ITS HISTORY AND ASSOCIATIONS

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE

I

SIR CHRISTOPHER CLITHEROW'S HOUSE

THE area with which we are concerned in the present volume is bounded on the north by Leadenhall Street, on the east by Lime Street, on the south by Leadenhall Place, and on the west by a line drawn from the eastern entrance of Leadenhall Market back again to Leadenhall Street. It covers about an acre and a half of ground, and occupies a goodly portion of the ward of Lime Street; while for ecclesiastical purposes it is, except as regards a section at the south-eastern corner, in the parish of St. Andrew Undershaft.

There are few spots in the City of London that are richer in historical associations than the area thus defined; for here grew to greatness the Honourable East India Company—that body of London merchants to whom Great Britain owes its Indian Empire and its eastern trade. Within the walls of the building which stood upon this site were held the councils by which a chain of trading posts developed into a vast dependency; and under its portals passed all the great men whose names are inseparably linked with the transference of India to British rule. Thither resorted all the great soldiers who served the Company, from Clive to the Duke of Wellington and the

heroes of the Mutiny; and all the Governors-General, from Warren Hastings to Dalhousie and Canning. Its dimly-lighted rooms and corridors were familiar to the eminent merchants who occupied the coveted position of Director. Among them were many remarkable men, whose names were household words in the City. Nowadays, however, they are scarcely remembered; and to the ordinary citizen perhaps the most interesting association of the East India House is that there for thirty-three years Charles Lamb earned his daily bread.

To a small portion of this area came in 1638 the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies"—to use the stately title bestowed by the original charter. Since its foundation in 1600, that body had already occupied two houses in other parts of the City. For the first twenty-one years of its existence the Company found a home in part of the mansion of its Governor, Sir Thomas Smythe, situated in Philpot Lane, Fenchurch Street; and then for another seventeen it occupied the well-known Crosby House, in Bishopsgate Street. There it would gladly have remained; but its lease expired in February, 1638, and the Earl of Northampton, to whom the property belonged, demanded terms which were judged to be exorbitant. As a matter of fact, the Company was permitted to continue its tenancy for nine months longer, during which period it was seeking in vain for suitable premises elsewhere. Then, as Lord Northampton would brook no further delay, a decision had perforce to be made. Sir Christopher Clitherow, who had just been elected Governor, offered accommodation in his own house, and this offer was gratefully accepted. The actual move seems to have been made at the end of October or beginning of November, 1638, the formal

tenancy of the new premises commencing on the first of the latter month.[1]

In endeavouring to form some idea of the topography of the area at that time, our chief dependence must be upon the *Survey of London*, by John Stow. It is true that forty years had elapsed from the time when that work was first published, and no doubt some changes had taken place during that period; but we may assume that in the main the description there given (which was repeated with one slight alteration in the edition of 1633) still held good. Stow had a special acquaintance with the spot, for he is believed to have dwelt during all the latter part of his life in a house on its northern edge, fronting upon Cornhill Street (as Leadenhall Street was then called); but his account of it is neither so full nor so precise as could be wished. We gather that anciently much of the area had been occupied by a great house belonging to Lord Nevill, which faced towards Lime Street and had a garden extending to the Leaden Hall. When Stow wrote, this house had been demolished and the forefront had been reconstructed in timber by Alderman Hugh Offley, who died in 1594. At the corner of Lime Street and Cornhill Street had once stood a "great messuage called Benbriges Inne"; but about the middle of the fifteenth century this had been replaced by a "fayre large frame of timber, containing in the high street one great house, and before it to the corner of Limestreet three other tenements," besides others in Lime Street itself. All these became the property of Alderman Stephen Kirton, who before his death in 1553 gave the great house and two of the tenements in front of

[1] I have dealt at some length with the Company's residence in Philpot Lane and at Crosby House in articles contributed to the *Home Counties Magazine* for March and September, 1912, and the *London Topographical Record*, vol. viii. (1913).

it as part of his daughter's dowry on her marriage to Sir Nicholas Woodroffe. Next to this house, on the main street, was one built by Richard Wethell or Whethill. Then came one built by Kirton but at the time of writing in the possession of Alderman Lee, who was engaged in reconstructing it; of this dwelling, afterwards Craven House and the next home of the East India Company, we shall hear more in the next chapter. On the west of

From Agas's Plan of London.

Lee's house stood one, anciently known as the Green Gate, which was then the residence of Alderman John Moore. Its neighbour was a house called the Leaden Porch, recently divided into two tenements, one of which was a tavern. Next door to this was a large house, the name of which is not given; and then came the front of the Leaden Hall, extending to Gracechurch Street. Behind the houses thus enumerated, the ground appears to have been fairly open, as it had been at the time (*c.* 1560–70) when Ralph

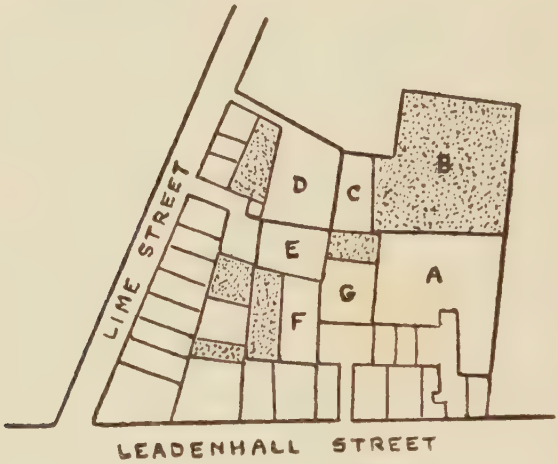
Agas drew his plan of London, the relevant portion of which is here reproduced.[1]

Such was the general appearance of the area, most of which was destined to be gradually absorbed by the East India Company's premises. For the present, however, we are chiefly concerned to discover as much as possible about the house of Sir Christopher Clitherow, the occupation of which first brought the Company to the spot. On this point Stow affords us no assistance. That Clitherow's house was adjacent to the one belonging to Lord Craven was certain, from the fact (mentioned later) that a window was opened from that building looking into Sir Christopher's garden; but whether it stood on the east or the west the contemporary records failed to disclose. The late Rev. W. J. Stracey-Clitherow (a descendant of Sir Christopher) was unable to throw any light upon the question; and it was not until I investigated the papers relative to the sale of the East India House premises (1861) that satisfactory evidence was obtained. From these it appeared that in October 1753 the East India Company purchased a brick building described as forming part of the capital messuage or tenement at one time the dwelling-house of Sir Christopher Clitherow, Knight, situate and being in or near Lime Street. The house thus acquired was then in the occupation of Giles Vincent,[2] and had in front of it

[1] In this plan Leadenhall Street is shown as running along the centre. At its western end, near its junction with Gracechurch Street, stands the old Leaden Hall, in the yard of which may be seen the "beam" for weighing merchandise. At the other end of the block of buildings, where Lime Street curves away southwards, is the site of the future East India House. The church of St. Andrew Undershaft is shown in the top right-hand corner.

[2] In August, 1738, the Company quarrelled with Vincent (who was one of their packers) for building up a wall on his ground in such a way as to block the lights in their Pay Office; and in the following year they were bringing a suit in Chancery against him.

a yard communicating with Lime Street, while behind it was a piece of ground which had formerly been a part of Sir Christopher's garden. Adjoining this house was an old timber building, which had been sold by Henry Clitherow to Robert Master, apparently about 1690, and also had a strip of the same garden attached. From these data, and with the aid of the following diagram, which is based upon the map of London by Ogilby and Morgan



Plan of Original Site.

(1677), it is not difficult to reach a conclusion that appears convincing.

On this diagram A represents Craven House, B its garden, C its warehouse, and D its backyard, communicating with Lime Street by a narrow passage at the south-east corner. The house marked E evidently indicates the position of the building occupied later by Giles Vincent; while F is probably the old timber building referred to above. The only other house which could be described as adjoining E is that marked G; but this seems to be

ruled out by the fact that its only outlet was into Leadenhall Street, and hence it could not be described as situate in or near Lime Street; though such a description is not inapplicable to E and F taken together. I conclude that, at the time of the Company's tenancy, Clitherow's premises included both E and F; and it seems possible that they were identical with, or stood on the site of, the timber dwelling erected by Hugh Offley after the demolition of Nevill House. As to the date when Sir Christopher acquired the property we have no information; but it must have been before 1625, because in that year Clitherow gave the parish of St. Andrew Undershaft a rent charge upon it.

During the whole time of the Company's tenancy, it would seem, they had only possession of part of the premises, the rest being in the occupation of Sir Christopher and, after his death, of his widow. Probably a few rooms sufficed for the staff; while a larger apartment may have been lent for the meetings of the Committees. Even "General Courts" (*i.e.* gatherings to which all the members were summoned) were held in the house, though at least on one occasion (when a larger assembly than usual was expected) the Hall of the Merchant Taylors Company was specially hired. For the accommodation afforded to them at Sir Christopher's house the Committees paid an annual rent of £150, until November, 1643, when they demanded, and obtained, a reduction to £100 per annum, with the added "benefitt of the little room over the Threasury."

Before dealing with the events that marked the Company's occupation of these premises, it may be well to say something concerning the constitution of that body and of the staff through which it conducted its business. As regards the former, we find a close analogy to the still

existing Livery Companies of the City of London. The East India Company owed its incorporation and its privileges to a royal charter, which prescribed its method of government, viz., by a Governor and twenty-four "Committees" (or Directors, as we should now term them). It consisted of "freemen," who had obtained admission in one of the following ways: (1) by patrimony, *i.e.* in virtue of the applicant's father having been a freeman; (2) by service, that is to say, after a regular apprenticeship, either to a member or to the Company; (3) by redemption, the would-be freeman making a cash payment; (4) by the gift of the Court of Committees. In the first two classes, a fine was levied on every admission; but this was little more than nominal, say 10s. to the poor-box and the usual fee to the Secretary. The trading capital was raised by subscriptions among the members for various "Voyages" or "Stocks" (which were wound up after the proceeds had been returned from the East), and shares in these could only be held by members of the Company.[1] Theoretically, admission as a freeman did not involve the investment of any money in such ventures; but practically nobody enrolled himself except with a view to holding shares.

The clerical establishment in the early days was on a very modest scale. Much of the work was done by the Committees themselves; and the only officers employed at the start were a Secretary and a Beadle. A Book-Keeper (termed later the Accountant), a Solicitor, a Cashier, and a Ships' Husband were soon added; but this remained the staff for some time. Auditors were originally chosen from

[1] This restriction was done away with early in the eighteenth century. The New East India Company (founded in 1698) had from the first adopted the practice of accepting anyone as a member who bought its scrip; and when, in 1702, a working arrangement was concluded between the two bodies, the Old East India Company was authorized to follow that practice.

among the members of the Company, but from 1621 we find first two paid officials, and then one, with this title. In 1635 the staff, all told, consisted of eighteen persons; and at Christmas in that year, in consequence of the depressed state of the Company's trade, most of these had their salaries drastically reduced. All officers, by the way, were elected annually—another point of contact with the methods of the Livery Companies.

After this brief explanation, we may proceed to notice the chief features of the Company's domestic history during the ten years of their sojourn in Clitherow's dwelling. For the first twelve months or so there is little to chronicle. Mention has already been made of the economies which the Company had been forced to make in the pay of their servants. By humble petitions at favourable times several of the staff had got their salaries raised again to the old figures; but this was only temporary. In July 1639, fresh reductions were made. Edward Sherburn,[1] the Secretary, was required to accept £100 in lieu of £120, a proposal to which he sorrowfully assented and was commended "for his modest answere and free submission." Markham, the Auditor, who had managed to manœuvre himself back to his old salary of £100, was again reduced to £50, afterwards raised to a hundred marks on his indignant

[1] Appointed April 14, 1625. He had previously been secretary to the Earl of Salisbury, when Lord Treasurer, and to Lord Keeper Bacon. Part of his correspondence with Sir Dudley Carleton has been printed by Mr. Sainsbury in his *Original Papers relating to Rubens*. From early in 1636 till his death (December, 1641) he was "Clerk of the Ordnance at the Tower" in addition to his post under the Company (see *Smyth's Obituary*, p. 19, where he is characterized as a "courteous gentleman"). In March, 1649, the Company voted £20 to his widow, who had lost her all "in these sad tymes." Seven years earlier she had been turned out of her house in the Tower because two of her sons were fighting on the King's side (*Lords' Journals*, vol. v. p. 448).

protests. Others were dismissed with promise of re-employment when better times should come; and those who remained had their scanty wages docked considerably. Evidently the Company had determined that its servants should share its ill as well as its good fortune, and should at least have a powerful motive for working for an improvement in the finances.

The shifts to which King Charles and his advisers were driven in the attempt to carry on the administration without having recourse to a Parliament led in 1640 to an extraordinary transaction which involved the Company in a severe loss. I have told the full story in the *English Historical Review* for July, 1904, and only a short summary is necessary here. The Company had offered for sale its stock of pepper, and some member of the King's party, knowing His Majesty's desperate need of money for the campaign against the Scots, suggested that the pepper should be bought on the usual credit terms and sold for cash. The Company was inclined to look askance at the proposal, but, as what appeared to be ample private security was forthcoming, it was with some reluctance accepted. The pepper was handed over and was promptly sold for over £50,600, while bonds were given in return for about £63,300, to be paid in five instalments. There is no doubt that the Treasury fully expected to be able to meet the liabilities as they fell due; but its financial embarrassments only increased as time went on, and the outbreak of the Civil War left little hope of repayment from that source. Something was recovered by holding back payments due by the Company on account of customs; a little was obtained by pressing some of the individuals who had joined in signing the bonds on the King's behalf, though these were all involved in his downfall and consequently

had little to pay with; and finally, after the Restoration, the remainder of the debt was compounded for what could be got. The net result was, however, the loss to the Company (apart from interest) of roughly half the amount, in addition to the injury sustained by so large a sum being withdrawn from employment at a critical time.

In the early part of November, 1641, Clitherow was carried to his grave in the parish church of St. Andrew Undershaft. His monument—a slab of modest size, surrounded by scroll-work, with his arms above, and a cherub beneath—may still be seen on the north wall of the church, near the door leading into St. Mary Axe. His rule had been too short for him to make much of a mark on the history of the Company; but he is a sufficiently dignified figure, with the prestige of high civic office worthily filled.[1] The only personal reference to him in his capacity of Governor appears to be that in a pamphlet by Richard Boothby, a discharged factor, entitled *A True Declaration of the Intollerable Wrongs done to Richard Boothby* (London, 1644). In this the writer says patronizingly that Clitherow was an honest and virtuous man, but that he was too much afraid of losing his salary as Governor and the money he received for accommodating the Company in his house to take an independent line (and do justice to Boothby!). No reliance, however, can be placed on such a statement; and in point of fact Clitherow seems to have had his full share of independence. It is related of him that when in 1638 a certain Henry White sought admission to the Eastland Company, producing a letter of recommendation from King Charles in which His

[1] For details of his career see the *Dictionary of National Biography*, *s.v.*, John Nicholl's *Account of the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers*, and an article by Mr. R. H. Ernest Hill in the *Home Counties Magazine* for July, 1903.

Majesty promised "a good turn" to the Company if the request were granted, Sir Christopher, who was then Governor, refused to comply, remarking that "they all knew what the King's good turns were when they came to seek them."

The likeness of Clitherow here given is from the family portrait by Marc Geerarts, reproduced with the kind permission of the late Rev. W. J. Stracey-Clitherow. As Sir Christopher is depicted in his robes as Lord Mayor, it must have been painted in 1635 or a few years later. A copy of this portrait, with a different background, hangs in the Court Room of the Governors of Christ's Hospital (Great Tower Street), in commemoration of the fact that Sir Christopher was President of the Charity from 1636 until his death.

His widow, who now became the Company's landlady, had an hereditary connexion with that body, for she was a daughter of Sir Thomas Cambell (Lord Mayor, 1609–10), who had been Governor of the Company from July 1602 to July 1603. A portrait of Lady Clitherow was reproduced with Mr. Hill's article already mentioned.

Clitherow was succeeded as Governor of the East India Company by his brother-in-law, Sir Henry Garway or Garraway, who had been Lord Mayor in 1639–40.[1] His

[1] He had distinguished himself during his term of office by his zealous enforcement of the payment of ship-money by the citizens. A good story concerning this is told in a contemporary news-letter (see *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 1640, p. 306). After vainly trying to induce the Sheriffs to distrain on those who would not pay, he started out himself on that errand and, entering a linen-draper's shop, seized a piece of linen that was lying on the counter. The draper, not a whit perturbed, retained hold of the linen until he had measured it, and then informed Garway that at so much an ell it would cost him £11, which should be at once booked to his lordship's account; at the same time calling upon the bystanders to witness that the goods had been delivered into his lordship's own hands.

SIR CHRISTOPHER CLITHEROW

complaisance towards the King rendered him very unpopular, and in the spring of 1643 he was dismissed from all his offices by the House of Commons. In his place the Company (July, 1643) elected their Deputy, Mr. William Cockayne,[1] who retained the post until the commencement of a new stock in 1657. His position was by no means an enviable one, for his term of office covered the most disturbed period of the Company's existence.

Naturally, the East India Company came in for a full share of the troubles brought upon the kingdom by the Civil War. On March 8, 1643, when most Londoners were labouring feverishly at the earthworks thrown up for the defence of the capital, "Mr. Deputy [William Methwold] related unto the court that hee had received a warrant to appeare yesterday before the Committee of Parlyament for the Safety of the Kingdome, before whome when hee appeared they did desire to borrowe of the Company some of their ordnance for the securing of the fortifications now in erecting for the defence of the Citty, in regard the stores in the Tower cannott furnish soe many as are needfull for that occasion; to which hee made this answeare to the said Committee, that hee of himselfe could not graunt it, but hee would accquainte the gennerallity therewith and knowe their answeare. And Mr. Deputy requested them that, now hee hath made knowne the desire of that Committee unto this court, that they would take consideration thereof and resolve what they intend to doe therein. Whereupon some of the gennerallity alleadged that they are intrusted for divers widdowes and orphanes, that they are at present much indebted at interest, and

[1] He is not to be confused with his kinsman, Sir William Cockayne, Mayor in 1619–20, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the Governorship in 1621 and 1624.

that the Company alsoe have occasion to use some of them themselves, and the rest by sale will yeeld the Company a considerable summe to pay part of their great debt. Besides it was further related that every one of them in his particular pay[s ?] towards the building of those fortifications. And Mr. Deputy being desired to putt it to the question, hee was pleased to frame it in this manner: 'As many of you as are content to lend the ordnance desired by the Committee for the Safety of the Kingdome for the fortifying of the bullwarks now in building for the safety of the Citty, hold upp your hands.' And not one hand appearing to bee erected, the opinion of the gennerallity was apparent for the negative by a gennerall erection of hands."

The Parliamentary Committee was not satisfied with this reply, and two days later sent some gentlemen to discuss the matter with the Court. But the latter could only reply that they were powerless to act against the decision of the generality, "but if those gentlemen pleased to buy any of them [the guns], they should have them at as cheape a rate as any."

A similar answer was returned on March 28 to the House of Commons itself; but on the order being reiterated the Court agreed to summon the generality again to discuss the matter. A meeting was accordingly held on April 12, when the Deputy Governor caused the order of the House to be read to the assembly, adding that "they might perceive that if the Company would not bee willing to lend them, that then the Committee for the Fortifications had power by that order to take them. . . . But the court being silent, and noe one man declaring his opinion either one way or other, Mr. Deputy was desired to putt it to the question, the which hee framed in this manner: 'As many of you as are content to lend some of your

ordnance as is desired by the Commons House of Parlyament hold upp your hands.' And there being not one hand erected, Mr. Deputy putt the question negatively, and by a gennerall erection of hands the motion was denyed by the whole court." The sequel is not stated, but it is plain that the Committee of Fortifications exercised their power and appropriated the guns, thirty-three in number. The Company petitioned several times that they should be either returned or paid for, and in 1644 a proposal was made by the authorities to purchase them. This, however, fell through owing to the Company demanding a price which was considered exorbitant; and finally in January, 1647, the guns were returned to them, probably much the worse for wear.

Contributions in money were also levied from the Company at various times. In April, 1643, they were assessed at £35 a week (an extortionate rate for which Mr. Deputy thought they "were behoulding to some of their neighbours") towards the weekly levy of £10,000 laid upon the City by the Parliament. Later in the year, in the hope of obtaining an ordinance against interlopers, they agreed to lend the House £5000 or £6000 at 8 per cent., towards paying navy debts and setting forth a fleet in the spring. The money was not actually paid over to the State, but the Company gave bonds to private individuals who were willing to find the cash but unwilling to accept the security of the Parliament. In March, 1644, the "Committee for the Hamlets of the Tower," desiring to raise a "trained band" at Blackwall, asked the Company to be at the charge of providing thirty men and arms there, as they themselves "could not finde above seaven men able to beare armes, it being a place altogether consisting of seamen"; this requisition, however, was successfully

resisted, the Company contending that they were not liable to any charge of the kind.

In addition to demands such as these, the Company's officers were put to endless trouble by the sweeping sequestration of the property of Royalists, which led to all sorts of requisitions for information as to the adventures of suspected persons, orders for staying money in the hands of the Company belonging to delinquents, and so on. The correspondence from India was intercepted and carefully scanned for treasonable references, and any letters addressed to persons active on the King's side gave rise to trouble. When we remember the extraordinary difficulty in carrying on any trade at all during a period of civil war—one of the Company's ships, for instance, was carried into Bristol by her captain and handed over to the Royalist garrison, causing a loss of £20,000—we can appreciate the hard task Governor Cockayne and his able Deputy, William Methwold, had in keeping the Company's head above water in those critical times.

In spite of their lessened trade the Company still found their quarters too cramped to be comfortable. On September 14, 1642, "the Court takeing into their consideration the great rent they pay for the use of my Lady Clitherowes house and the small accommodation they have for want of warehouse roome, did thinke fitt that a more convenient house shalbe looked out against Allhallowtide next, when the yeare wilbe expired for this." In the previous January they had instructed two of their number to treat with Lord Northampton [1] "about the hyreing

[1] The second Earl of that creation. He fell in March, 1643, at Hopton Heath, responding proudly to his captors, who bade him beg his life: "I scorn to take quarter from such base rogues as you are." Not long before, he had granted a lease of Crosby House to Alderman Langham for ninety-nine years.

of Crosby House for the Companies use"; and in the succeeding October—"being stinted in warehouse room and cellarage"—and again in May, 1644, further attempts were made to get back to their old premises. Nothing however, resulted from these overtures.

In October, 1647, their hopes were turned in a new direction by information that Mr. Hall, Lord Craven's agent, had been authorized to treat with the Company for letting to them his lordship's residence next door to Sir Christopher's; and as the Court "were of opinion that that house would bee more convenient for their businesse, in case they could have it at a reasonable rate, and cheaper then this they now reside in," a committee was appointed to negotiate. A fortnight later the Deputy Governor reported that the house was offered for £200 a year; "that there was warehouses which were lett out for £82 per annum"; and that he thought they might get "a little tenement of £16 per annum" into the bargain. The agent, however, wanted £220 a year if the latter was to be included (a point of importance to the Company because, as we shall see later, the tenement was over a backway into Lime Street); on these terms he offered a lease for twenty-one years and engaged to put the place in repair. Methwold declared that he still believed the house could be procured at £200 and "at that rent it would bee worth their money"; and if they should repent their bargain, he would at any time take the premises off their hands at £180 a year. A decision was deferred, pending another effort to come to terms; and at last on November 19, 1647, it was announced that Lord Craven was willing to accept the Company's proposal. It was thereupon resolved to take the premises and to give notice to quit their present home the following Lady Day.

One would have thought that the matter had been finally settled. But in the following February the Company seem to have wavered in their resolution, for on the 16th we find this entry in their minutes: "The Court was this day made acquainted that if they pleased they might have Crosby House for £150 per annum and £700 fyne, and £150 per annum for the bricke warehouse and cellers, it being in all £300 a yeare. The Court considering hereof, did conceive that house would bee most commodious for the Companies occasions, and that they should not need Leadenhall warehouse if they had that house; [and] resolved to take Crosby House if they may have it, the bricke warehouse, and cellars for £300 per annum, without a fyne. And Mr. Bowen was willed to attend Alderman Langham at the Tower, and acquainte him with the Companies resolution." Nothing came of this, however, and the Company determined to go through with the former plan. In April a Mr. Bramston, who was then living in the backyard of Lord Craven's house, was permitted to remain and use the warehouses until Midsummer; and a fortnight later a committee was appointed to superintend the necessary repairs. On July 21 Mr. Sheriff Brown requested the Company to defer their occupation and allow him the use of the house during his term of office; but to this they returned answer that they had already part of their goods in it and could not spare it, though they would undertake to leave Clitherow's house in ten days if he cared to take that. This brings us close to the actual transfer, which must have taken place at the end of July or beginning of August, 1648, for on the second of the latter month "a Court of Committees" was "houlden at the Lord Craven's house." The rent of the old premises was paid up to Michaelmas, in consideration

of the fact that some of the Company's books remained there until the middle of September, and as a reward for Clitherow's complaisance in allowing the Company "to make a light into his garden," on condition that it should be "stopped upp when hee desires the same."

II

CRAVEN HOUSE

THE Company had now reached its final home. The house in which it found itself was one of no great antiquity. John Stow (1603) describes it as a "faire house, builded by Stephen Kirton, Alderman [1]; Alderman Lee [2] doth now possesse it, and againe new buildeth it"; to which Stow's editor of 1618 adds, "Now it is in the custody of Sir William Cravon." At the time, therefore, that the East India Company became its occupants the building was about half a century old.

Of the history of the house during those fifty years we

[1] Master of the Merchant Taylors Company, 1542–43; alderman for Cheap Ward from 1549 to his death in 1553.

[2] Sir Robert Lee, Sheriff in 1594–95 and Lord Mayor in 1602–3. During his period of office Queen Elizabeth died, and to him consequently fell the duty of proclaiming King James and later on of welcoming the new monarch to London. He seems to have been a wine-merchant, and it was facetiously said of him that "three things which make others poore make [him] riche—wine, women and dice; he was fortunat in marrying riche wives, lucky in great gaming at dice, and prosperous in sale of his wines" (*Manningham's Diary*, p. 149). He was one of the first members of the East India Company, subscribing £300. His will (69 Stafford) makes no specific allusion to his house, though it mentions that he was then (1602) dwelling in the parish of St. Andrew Undershaft. We may fairly conclude that he held his mayoralty there, as Craven did after him—a strong testimony to the size and importance of the building. The *Inquisitio post mortem* (Public Record Office, C., vol. ccxciv. No. 108) describes it as *nuper in tenura sive occupatione cujusdam Gulihelmi Allen et postea in tenura sive occupatione predicti Roberti Lee.*

know comparatively little. Lee died towards the close of 1605, and it was probably soon after this date that the premises were leased to Sir William Craven. At all events we may conclude that he was in occupation in June, 1608, when his eldest son, William,[1] was baptized at the parish church of St. Andrew Undershaft; and in that case he no doubt held his mayoralty there in 1610–11, when he inaugurated his period of office with a pageant of extraordinary splendour. In 1617 Lady Hatton, the quarrelsome wife of Chief Justice Coke (whose name she had refused to bear), was committed to the custody of Sir William Craven by order of King James, for endeavouring to prevent the marriage of her daughter with Buckingham's elder brother. When the wedding ceremonies were over, however, the bridegroom's family, who were anxious to cajole her of some of the wealth she had inherited from her first husband, judged it politic to seek a reconciliation; and on November 1 "Buckingham and other lords, twelve coaches in all, went to fetch Lady Hatton from Sir William Craven's and brought her to her father's at Cecil house." The attempt to placate her ladyship failed, and her new son-in-law was not a whit more successful than Coke had been in his attempts to make her change her mind. It will be remembered that the incident brought trouble upon Lord Keeper Bacon, who had imprudently taken the lady's part against his old enemy her husband, and was in consequence soundly rated by the King and his favourite.

Craven died in July, 1618. By his will[2] he left to his widow the lease of his house "and the remaynder of yeres

[1] Afterwards Lord Craven. He was born on the 17th of that month; see *Nativities set by John Booker*, among the Ashmolean MSS. (Black's Catalogue, p. 82). The date is usually given as 1606.

[2] 75 Meade. Some lengthy extracts are given in Strype's edition of *Stow*, book ii. p. 68.

unexpired in the same during her naturall life, she paying every halfe yere the rent due to the landlord and keeping the house in repayre." In the event of her death, it was to pass to her eldest son. As the latter appears to have been in 1648 the owner, not merely the lessee, it is to be presumed that either he or his mother had purchased the freehold in the meanwhile. Lady Craven makes no reference to the matter in her will (61 Byrde).

During the thirty years that elapsed between Sir William's death and the commencement of the Company's tenancy we find no mention of the house. Presumably it was let, at all events after the decease of Lady Craven in 1624. Her son was then a youth of sixteen, studying at Trinity College, Oxford, and of course had no use for a London mansion. When next we hear of him he is in high favour at Court, with the result that in March, 1627, he was both knighted and made Baron Craven of Hampsted Marshall. He attached himself to that " Queen of Hearts," Elizabeth of Bohemia, whose amiability and sprightliness attracted so many of the noble spirits of the time ; and he spent several years on the Continent fighting for her or for the Protestant champion, Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. At the storming of Creuznach he was the first to mount the breach, and his gallantry drew from the Swedish king the laughing remark that he was evidently willing to give his younger brother a chance of succeeding to his title and estates. In 1637 Craven and the young Prince Rupert were captured by the Imperialists ; and his release, two years later, is said to have cost him £20,000. He took no active part in the Civil War, being still engaged on the Continent looking after the interests of the Queen of Bohemia ; though, as we shall see, his known devotion to the royal family drew upon him the confiscation of his

LORD CRAVEN

English property. From his crippled means, however, he advanced large sums to the exiled Prince Charles, who rewarded him, after the Restoration, with the grant of an earldom. The rest of his life was spent mainly at his house in Drury Lane.[1] During the Plague the intrepid old soldier remained in town and took an active part in aiding the sufferers, for whose benefit he built a row of pesthouses in Tothill Fields. He was indefatigable in keeping order on any occasion of popular commotion, and Pepys describes him as riding up and down like a madman during some prentice riots. Like Horace Walpole, he could never resist going to a fire, and he and his horse were such familiar figures at such scenes that the latter was popularly believed to be able to smell an outbreak immediately it occurred, no matter how distant it might be. In 1670, on the death of the Duke of Albemarle, Charles gave Lord Craven the command of the Coldstreams ; and when at the Revolution the Dutch troops advanced across the Park to take possession of St. James's Palace, the veteran mustered his guards and would have opposed them by force had not his master intervened and commanded him to withdraw. Under the new monarch the Earl passed his days in retirement, busying himself chiefly in gardening. He died in April, 1697, in his eighty-ninth year, having lived through five reigns. He had never married, and his honours died with him, except the barony, which went to a distant cousin.

Such was the nobleman of whose town house—useless to him, as London was too hot to hold so well known a

[1] Drury House, which he purchased and rebuilt. It stood at the junction of Wych Street and Drury Lane. Until recently its site was marked by the Olympic Theatre, which has in turn been destroyed by a "metropolitan improvement."

Royalist—the Company became tenants in 1648. Its general plan is well shown on the portion of Ogilby and Morgan's map of London (1677) here reproduced, the original scale of which is 100 feet to the inch. This shows an irregular-shaped building (marked B88), the main portion of which stands well back from the street. In front was a small courtyard, on the east of which were a couple of subsidiary buildings, one of them looking out upon Leadenhall Street. This was evidently carried over the little passage leading into the courtyard, and the whole frontage to the road was about thirty feet. Behind the house was a garden about seventy feet square, laid out in formal style, with probably a well in the centre, since we read that in July, 1686, it was decided " to cause the pump in the garden to be mended and the well scower'd on the best terms procurable." On the eastern side of the garden was a building which we take to be the warehouse (already alluded to) belonging to Craven House ; this in turn gave on to an open space which was doubtless the Company's backyard, communicating at its south-eastern corner with Lime Street by means of a short passage, over which was the tenement which was first rented, and then purchased, with the House.

Apparently the new premises were found to be larger than the Company's shrunken trade required, for in the following November a committee appointed to look into the matter reported that " they finde foure roomes with a garrett next the streete, which together with the parlour and the lowe roome next the streete might bee turned into a shoppe and . . . lett out to good proffitt," adding that Mr. John Spiller (one of the Company's servants who acted also as Housekeeper and who seems to have been in occupation of the part which it was proposed to let) could

THE DISTRICT IN 1677

be accommodated with two or three rooms in another portion of the building, together with a kitchen and a yard. Evidently, however, Spiller was unwilling to be disturbed, for in the following month the Court accepted his offer to rent at £20 per annum " the two roomes on the ground, one wainscott roome, and two roomes over that and two garretts, all next the streete " ; but they stipulated that the Company should have " the use of the parlor, and hee not to lett out any part of the said roomes, nor to bring any women to lodge in the said house after Candlemas, except his wife and servant ; and hee is also not to use any of the Companies' fire and candles in that part of the House." [1] This arrangement, however, came to nothing, for about the time when it was to take effect, Mr. Spiller repented of his bargain and begged for the rooms formerly assigned for him. It was thereupon proposed to turn the forepart of the house into a separate tenement and let it off ; but nothing seems to have been done in regard to this for the present, and in the autumn of 1649 the Deputy Governor, William Methwold, was permitted to use one of the chambers as a lodging-room, presumably because his newly-purchased mansion at Brompton (the future Cromwell House) was at an inconvenient distance from the City in busy times.

It seems strange to find the East India Company so anxious to make a few pounds a year by letting part of their premises ; but their trade was depressed and their

[1] The minute goes on to say : " And for the money taken at the doore of the markett women, they resolved to have it putt into the poores box ; but first Mr. Spiller to take it moderately and to lett them knowe at their next meeting what it amounts daily unto." The meaning of this is not clear ; but possibly some of the women selling goods in Leadenhall Market used a short cut through the Company's garden (thus avoiding other dues ?) and paid a trifle for the privilege.

expenses heavy, and every penny was of consequence. Moreover, the demands of the Parliament for pecuniary assistance still continued, for in the minutes of a General Court held on January 24, 1649, we read :

" Mr. Samuell Moyer and Mr. John Langley presented themselves in court and acquainted them that they were sent unto them from the Committee of the Navy and Customes sitting at Westminster and from the Commissioners for Regulating the Navy and Customes sitting at Mincing Lane, to desire the Company, in regard of the present urgency of the State for money to sett forth a fleete of shipps this spring, that they would lend 4 or £5000, for which they should have security out of the monethly payment of the customes, being £16,000, formerly allowed to the 16 Judges, and £8 per centum interest, and that the said money should bee reimbursed to the Company at 4 severall payments, vizt., the first payment to bee on the 25th of March next, the second on the 24th of June, the third on the 29th of September, and the last payment at Christmas next ; the which should bee employed onely for securing of the seas from the Irish rebells and other pyratts. Whereupon Mr. Governour told them that most of the adventurers in the stocke were gone, and that these gentlemen that were present were onely adventurers in the Second Gennerall Voyage, but if they pleased hee would propound the same unto them ; which upon their desire hee declared the same unto them, and they considering hereof declared themselves to bee willing to lend part of the said summe ; but they did by a gennerall erection of hands referre this businesse to the 16 Committees chosen for mannaging of the Voyages affaires, to lend so much of the said £4000 as they should thinke fitting."

Accordingly, at a meeting of the Committees for the

Second General Voyage held on January 29, Mr. Moyer presented a letter from the Commissioners for Regulating the Navy and Customs to the same effect. "Severall of the Committee then questioned whether this securitye propounded would bee sufficient, and that it was very necessary that some of the Committee should speake with the Commissioners of the Customes to knowe if they will oblige themselves to pay what this Committee shall lend upon the aforesaid assignement; to which was answeared by Mr. Moyer that before they parted with any money they should have such security as should give them satisfaction. And after a greate deale of dispute concerning this businesse it was conceived the best security would bee to have an order from the Committee of the Navy and Customes that they might bee reimbursed what they lend out of the custome of the goods which shall first arrive from India for accompt of this Voyage. This businesse having received a large debate, Mr. Governour was desired to putt it to the question, the which hee propounded in this manner: 'As many of you as are willing to advance £4000 for the supply of the Navy now preparing to bee sett forth, upon an order of the Committee of the Navy and Customes that you shalbee paid out of the custome of the goods which shall first arrive from India, and have £8 per centum for forbearance of your money, hold upp your hands': the which was by erection of hands gennerally consented unto and agreed upon."

But if the new Government occasionally troubled the Company for a loan, it also rendered them a service of the highest importance. For twenty years they had urged in vain that satisfaction should be demanded from the States-General for the losses the English had suffered in the Indies. Again and again the King had promised them full

satisfaction; but his occasional blustering failed to make any impression at the Hague, and no satisfaction was forthcoming. In 1652, however, Cromwell, who had other scores to settle with Holland, took up the Company's claims, and when the war that followed was ended by the Treaty of Westminster (April, 1654) the Dutch were forced to promise full compensation. Commissioners were appointed on both sides to settle the amount due, with the result that a sum of £85,000 was awarded to the London Company. The amount was duly paid; but the losses for which it had been claimed had extended over a period of forty years, and a question at once arose as to which of the various joint stocks had a right to share in the money, and in what proportion. The matter was referred to arbitration, the cash being meanwhile deposited in the hands of two merchants; and when the question was decided, a further delay was occasioned by a demand from the Council for the loan of the money to meet the pressing needs of the State. The following is the account on the records (*Minutes of a General Court*, July 18, 1655): "Mr. Governour declared to the gennerallity that hee supposed it is not unknowne to them what paines hath bine taken in endeavouring to possesse themselves of the £85,000 from the Dutch, now deposited in the hands of Sir Thomas Vyner and Mr. Alderman Riccard by an order of the Councell untill the proprietors of that mony be knowne, the which hath since bine determined by referrees, and thereupon a petition was presented to His Highnes, praying order to receive the said mony soe deposited; the which was referred to a Committee of the Councell, who sent a summons for some of the Company to appeare before them on Friday last; and they makeing their appearance accordingly, the Councell acquainted them

that His Highnes hath great occasion at present for mony, and therefore they desired the Company to lend them the said summe of £85,000 for 12 months; to which they replyed that it concerned a great number of persons, many of which were very necessitous, and if Their Lordshipps would please to give their proposall in writeing, they would communicate it to the Gennerall Court and returne Their Lordshipps an answere speedily. Hee then presented to the court a paper sealed up, without any direction, which was sent him from Secretary Thurlow, but not signed; upon opening thereof it appeared to bee the proposall from the Councell, and it being twice read in court, hee desired them to consider what answere they would thinke fitt to returne thereunto. And after consideration was had thereof and the same debated at large, the Court was inclinable to accommodate His Highnes soe farr as was in their power to doe safely and lawfully, in regard many widdowes, orphants and executors are concerned therein who are not present; therefore it was at length resolved to drawe a petition by way of remonstrance, the heads whereof was now drawne, read, and approved of. And for answere to the Councells proposall, Mr. Governour was desired to putt the following question to the vote, viz., 'Whither this Court will and doe consent, soe farr as they cann lawfully binde widowes, orphants, executors and absent persons, to lend to His Highnes £50,000, parte of the £85,000 deposited, upon the security of the Greate Seale of England.' The which question was resolved on in the affirmative." A committee was thereupon appointed to draw up the answer to the Council and "to agree and accept of the best termes for payment and security they can gett or shall thinke fitting." As a result, it was arranged that the money should be repaid by three equal instalments,

the first at the end of a year, and the other two at intervals of six months. A warrant to this effect, under the Great Seal of England, is still preserved at the India Office; but the pledge thus given was never redeemed. Right up to the Restoration the finances of the government remained in a desperate condition, and any money that became available was used for other purposes than the redemption of debt.

A few months later a further demand was made for the loan of part of the balance, though only for six weeks. At a meeting of the United Joint Stock held on October 26, 1655, this was agreed to, as shown in the following minute: "Collonell Harby, one of the Commissioners of the Customes, came this day into court and acquainted them that His Highnes had a great occasion for the present use of £10,000 for the compleating the payment of Gennerall Blaks marriners, and that hee desired the Comissioners to raise the same where they best could; and they knowing the Company to be soe well stored (intimateing the mony in Sir Thomas Vyner and Alderman Riccard their hands) and that they could not tell where else to accomodate His Highnes, promiseing that if the Company please to accomodate His Highnes with the loane of £10,000 for six weeks it wilbe taken for a high favour, and that they should have an order from His Highnes for the repayment with interest out of the groweing customes which are not any other way engaged yett, and withall the personall security of all the Commissioners. The Court, taking due consideration hereof, were pleased to condiscend thereunto, soe that hee procure such an order and give such security as hee propounded."

Though the English had been victorious over the Dutch in European waters, in the East the Company had suffered

severe losses at the hands of these powerful foes, while at home their position was in the highest degree precarious. The five years for which the United Joint Stock had been subscribed came to an end in 1654, and it seemed hopeless to attempt to raise a further stock unless the Protector could be induced to grant a charter renewing the monopoly of Eastern trade, since the royal grant of 1609 could no longer be invoked for this purpose. There was, however, a strong movement in favour of the trade being thrown open, and the Council of State, busied with matters of more urgent importance, delayed to deal with so thorny a question. In the meantime the Committees of the United Joint Stock ordered drastic reductions in their Asian establishments and, although they sent out a few ships, did so chiefly in order to bring home the goods remaining there. The opportunity thus afforded to private merchants of despatching vessels to the East, on the pretext of maintaining English commerce in those parts, was eagerly seized, with the result that the Indian harbours were soon full of "interlopers," competing with one another both in the sale of European goods and in the purchase of calicoes, indigo, and saltpetre. The result was an ample vindication of the Company's contention that the trade could most profitably be carried on by a single body relying upon permanent factories, and many of those who had been most persistent in their advocacy of unrestricted commerce began to change their views. Still the Council of State procrastinated, until at the beginning of 1657 the Company, in despair, resolved to sell all its factories and privileges and abandon the trade, unless some decision was come to within a month. This had the desired effect, for the Council quickly advised the Protector to grant exclusive privileges to a new Joint Stock.

A charter to that effect passed the Broad Seal in October, 1657, while a promise was given that this should be confirmed by an Act of Parliament. The result was the subscription of a new stock of close upon £740,000, of which, however, only one-half was called up. By a new arrangement, this stock was not to be wound up at the expiration of a given period; and thus the Company became for the first time a continuous body of stockholders, with a settled capital.

We must now revert to the history of the Company's house. First, however, we will notice a few miscellaneous entries in the Court Minutes of the time. The following is amusing, with its mixture of prayer and feasting: "The Court having formerly resolved to have a sermon and a meeting to returne thankes to Almighty God for the safe arrivall of the shipps from India, but as yett had deferred the same, did now resolve to have a thanksgiving sermon at this parish church on Thursday come sennight next in the forenoone;[1] and to dine at the Shippe Taverne in Bishopsgate Streete" (August 28, 1649). And this, dated a week later, is still more so: "The Court was pleased to bestowe £3 upon Mr. Frauncis Lenton, a poett, who had writt a poem about the arrivall of the seaven shipps now returned, and had this day presented the same to the Court; though the Court did not very well rellish his conceits, and desired him neither to print them nor proceed any further in making verses upon any occasion which may concerne the Company."

Here is an interesting entry in the minutes of a General

[1] The service was duly held at St. Andrew Undershaft on September 6. The preacher was the Rev. Edward Terry, who had been chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe during his memorable embassy to India; and the sermon was afterwards published under the title of *The Merchants and Mariners Preservation and Thanksgiving.*

Court, January 5, 1650: "The gennerallity being assembled, Mr. Governour acquainted them that hee had lately received an Order of Parlyament dated the 31st of October last, requiring all Governours, members of Companies, and their officers to take the engagement mencioned in the said Order, vizt.: 'I doe declare and promise that I wilbe true and faithfull to the Commonwealth of England as the same is now established, without King or House of Lords'; togeather with a paper of instructions directed to Mr. Alderman Pennington, Mr. Sheriffe Wilson and himselfe touching the same, subscribed by the Lord President of the Councell of State; both which were now read and, the words of the engagement being ingrossed on 2 peeces of parchment, Mr. Alderman Pennington, being present, first subscribed the same, and then Mr. Governour, together with divers of the generallity present."

And here is the record (February 1, 1650) of an act of charity, a grace in which the Company was never lacking: "The Court was pleased to bestowe 20 nobles out of the poores box upon the poore of Barkin parish who sustained losse by the late fire there." The reference is to the recent explosion of twenty-seven barrels of gunpowder, by which the church of All Hallows, Barking, near the Tower, was badly damaged. Strype (1720) gives the following quaint account of the disaster: "One of the houses in this place was a ship-chandler's, who upon the 4th of January, 1649 [1650], about seven of the clock at night, being busy in his shop about barrelling up of gunpowder, it took fire, and in the twinkling of an eye blew up not only that but all the houses thereabouts, to the number (towards the street and in back alleys) of fifty or sixty. The number of persons destroyed by this blow could never be known, for the next house but one was the Rose Tavern, a house never (at that

time of night) but full of company. And in three or four days after, digging, they continually found heads, arms, legs. . . . They found the mistress of the house of the Rose Tavern sitting in her bar, and one of the drawers standing by the bar's side with a pot in his hand, only stifled with dust and smoak; their bodies being preserved whole by means of great timbers falling cross one upon another. . . . There was also found upon the upper leads of Barkin Church a young child lying in a cradle, as newly laid in bed, neither the child nor cradle having the least sign of any fire or other hurt. It was never known whose child it was, so that one of the parish kept it for a memorial; for in the year 1666 I saw the child, grown to be then a proper maiden."

On January 4, 1654, the Court was called upon to decide a domestic squabble: "Upon reading a petition from Bartholomew Holloway, who was by the Companys order to lodge in this House at such tymes as Mr. Spiller shalbee out of towne, whereby the House might bee carefully and duely looked unto, who complained that hee was compelled to sitt up all night or else must have left the House and noe body in charge, by reason that Mr. Spillers sonne in law brought his family and tooke up all the beds in the House; therefore hee desired the Court would bee pleased to settle the busines for the future, wherby hee might receive noe blame; and Mr. Spiller being called in, hee acquainted the Court that it was an accident onely; whereupon the Court ordred that Bartholomew Holloway should have a bed in Mr. Threasurers chamber, and continue there altogeather in the absence of Mr. Spiller, but that hee should not bring any of his children, and that Mr. Spiller should have liberty to leave Lazarus Weeden in his owne roome to looke to his things, and Mr. Spiller to

beare the charge thereof; and for the future the Court directed them to live lovingly togeather and lett there bee noe heartburning betweene them."

The mention of "Mr. Threasurers chamber" reminds us that the Company had just abolished this post and entrusted the duties to a committee formed of three of the members of the Court: an important change, for there had been a Treasurer from the very commencement of the trade.[1] The position was no sinecure, considering the amount of money that passed through the Treasurer's hands (any deficiency in which he was expected to make good), the state of the currency, and the confusion of the stocks; while the risk it involved of another character is shown by the fact that in 1637 John Massingberd, who was practically, though not nominally, the Treasurer, was unsuccessfully prosecuted in the Star Chamber on a charge of exporting gold and silver without a proper licence. Seven years later, on the retirement of Robert Bateman, Massingberd was formally elected to the post, which he held till his death on November 23, 1653. He had really become a salaried servant of the Company, who also paid the wages (100 marks per annum) of his assistant, Michæl Dunkin. The latter acted as cashier, and had a clerk named Harris, whose salary of £40 was paid by Massingberd out of his own allowance. On December 16, 1653, the question of future arrangements came up for consideration: "The Court then fell into dispute whither to choose a Threasurer or a committee to have inspection into the Threasury and the two casheirs to performe the busines; and it was thought fitt and soe resolved that Mr. Alderman Riccard, Mr. Tho. Andrew, and Mr. Anthony Bateman,

[1] The charter of Queen Elizabeth makes no provision for the election of such an officer, but it assumes that one will be appointed.

or any two of them, should bee a committee to oversee the Threasury and take care of the Threasury and of the Company's seale; and that they should have the same power as the Threasurer formerly had; and alsoe that they should have two keys of the chest betweene them, and if one should have occation to bee out of towne, then hee to deliver his key to the third man. And the Court being well satisfied of the abillity and fidellity of Mr. Dunckin and Mr. Harris, did order that they two should performe the daily busines of the Threasury; and that Mr. Dunckin should have a third key to the said chest, and the Committees were desired to deliver such mony to Mr. Dunckin as hee shall have occation to pay, and alsoe to receive from him when hee hath more mony in his custody then is needfull." It was settled that Dunkin should have £150 a year from the date of Massingberd's death, and should be required to "make good all losse and want of cash that shall hereafter happen from time to tyme"; and that Harris should be assistant cashier at £80 per annum.

The new arrangement appears to have worked well; and at the winding up of the United Joint Stock the services of the three Committees who had supervised the Treasury were recognized by the grant of fifty pounds to each of them to buy a piece of plate, in addition to their ordinary remuneration as Committees. The new stock adopted from the first a similar plan, and thus the title of Treasurer ceased to be used, except as an occasional designation of the official more generally termed the Cashier-General.

To return to the history of the building. Though, as we have seen, Lord Craven took no active part in the Civil War, his known devotion to the Stuart cause marked him

out for reprisals, and in March, 1651, the Parliament declared his estates forfeited. On the 18th of the previous month the Commissioners for Compounding had warned the Company to pay no more rent to his lordship. By a further order of December 4, 1651, the rent for the past nine months was directed to be made over to the "Committee for London"; and at the same time the Commissioners decided to make a valuation of the house and let it to the Company on a seven years' lease from the State. An agreement to this effect was approved by the Court on February 25, 1652, the rent determined upon being £140, which was to include the tenement at the back gate (then in the occupation of "Widow Macroe"); and on the 19th of the following month a lease, signed by three of the Sequestrators, to run for seven years from Lady Day, was accepted by the Company. Soon, however, came a change of landlords. Early in August, 1652, the Parliament passed an Act for the sale of Lord Craven's estates.[1] At a meeting of the Fourth Joint Stock held on September 22, a suggestion was made on behalf of the United Stock that the sum of £2000 which was standing in the Company's books to the credit of the Poplar Almshouse Fund should be spent in buying the house, the rent to form the income of the Fund. But the meeting could not agree which of the two Stocks should find the cash; and, moreover, the security was not liked, for there was

[1] The following year his lordship petitioned for the repeal of this Act, pointing out that he had left England before the war began, with the consent of the House, and had never acted in any way against the Parliamentary cause. He alleged that the sale of his estates had twice been negatived in the House, and that the majority by which it was at last carried was at the most three in an assembly of forty-seven. This appeal was unsuccessful, as was also one he addressed to Cromwell in February, 1654. In September of the latter year, however, the further sale of his property was stopped by order of the Protector in Council.

always the chance that the King might return, and then where would the Company's money be? Still, there seems to have been a considerable section in favour of acquiring the property by some means or other, and on October 8 Mr. Deputy Methwold and one of his colleagues undertook to buy the house in their own names and give the Company the refusal of the bargain. However, this scheme also fell through; and at a meeting held on April 6, 1653, it was announced that the State had sold the house to Mr. Edward Tooke, and the small tenement at the back to Mr. Pufford; and that the Company must pay their rent to these two, apparently in the proportion of £130 for the house and £10 for the tenement. Tooke seems to have sold the property before long to Mr. John Sweeting, to whom we find the Company paying their rent in April, 1658. In July of that year, as the lease was running out, a committee was appointed to search for suitable premises elsewhere; but this may have been merely a move in the game of bargaining, and on September 1 the Company decided to accept an offer from Sweeting to renew the lease for another seven years from Lady Day, 1659, without a fine, the rent being fixed at £200 per annum and the Company undertaking to do all necessary repairs. This arrangement lasted until the Restoration put Lord Craven in possession of his own again.

One little incident of this time should not be omitted. In February, 1659, it was learnt that a certain William Phillips proposed to turn some premises next door to the Company's into a "victualling house." This being deemed both "inconvenient and daungerous," it was resolved to oppose the grant of the necessary licence; but two months later the opposition was withdrawn, on condition that Phillips bricked up the door and window at the top of

his house, and thus cut off any access to the Company's premises by means of the roof. We may note also that in February, 1659, a sum of £22, 10s. was paid "for repairing the great windore in the Hall" of the East India House.

III

THE PURCHASE OF CRAVEN HOUSE

ON May 29, 1660, King Charles II entered London "with a triumph of above twenty thousand horse and foote, brandishing their swords and shouting with inexpressible joy; the wayes strew'd with flowers, the bells ringing, the streetes hung with tapestrie, fountaines running with wine; the Maior, Aldermen and all the Companies in their liveries, chaines of gold, and banners; lords and nobles clad in cloth of silver, gold, and velvet; the windowes and balconies well set with ladies; trumpets, music, and myriads of people flocking even so far as from Rochester, so as they were seven houres in passing the Citty, even from two in the afternoone till nine at night. . . . I stood in the Strand," adds John Evelyn, "and beheld it and bless'd God."

The East India Company was not behind the rest of London in its hearty acceptance of the new order of things. The charter recently granted by him who was now generally termed the Usurper was quietly suppressed—so thoroughly that at the present day not even a copy of it can be discovered; and a fresh grant of privileges was humbly sought from the new occupant of Whitehall. To smooth the way, a present of some sort was decided upon; and at a general meeting held on June 5, 1660: "Mr. Governour . . . acquainted the Court that it had been the

thoughts and opinion of the Committees that it would well befitt this Company, and much improve their interest, to addresse themselves to His Majesty with some convenient present to congratulate his happy restitution to the Crowne and Government, and shew a sence of their loyall affection to him, as well as the Merchant-Adventurers have done and the Turkie Company resolved to doe; which motion was so readily embraced by the generallity that immediatelie it became more their care how to performe it then to make any scruple of doing it. And thereupon some gentlemen proposed a jewell, others coyned gold; but it being most generally conceived that plate for furnishing His Majesties house would at this juncture be very seasonable and a continuall memoriall of the donours: resolved by a question that the value of £3,000 in such plate as shalbe thought most fitt should with all convenient speed be prepared in a readinesse, and be presented to His Majestie in the Companyes name accordinglie." As it turned out, the plate cost in all £3210. In addition, several presents were made to members of the royal entourage; and on August 31, in obedience to a hint that the Duke of York expected a similar compliment, the sum of £1000 was voted for presentation to His Royal Highness in any form the Committees might decide. The exact nature of the present is not recorded, but a payment of £1062, 10s. on this account was approved on November 28, 1660.

The Coronation of King Charles put the Company to a further expense. In March, 1661, "Sir Thomas Chamberlen and Sir William Thomson were intreated to give direction what preparation to make against the Coronation to represent the Companies loyall gratitude to His Majesty, and how to beautify the front of this house." From the

invaluable Mr. Pepys we learn that it was at this time that the ornamental superstructure of wood was fixed over the top windows. On April 17, 1661, he tells us, he "saw the picture of the ships and other things this morning set up before the East Indy House, which are well done." Probably the Company, in addition to its own decorations, contributed to the general fund which resulted in the erection of four triumphal arches under which King Charles rode on April 22 (the day before his coronation) in his state procession from the Tower to Whitehall. John Ogilby gives us a full description of these structures. The first, representing Monarchy vanquishing Rebellion, was "in Leaden-Hall-Street, neer Lime-Street end," and therefore quite close to the East India House. The second was at Cornhill, near the Exchange. This was intended to have special reference to marine matters, and had for centrepiece a picture of Charles I, with the young Prince Charles, viewing the *Sovereign of the Seas*. At the sides of the painting were figures representing Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, carrying flags with the arms of the various Companies trading to those parts. It is somewhat curious to find from the plate in Ogilby's book that the banner with the East India Company's arms was borne by Africa, a plump black woman wearing little beyond a crown; but it seems that Asia was already provided with the banner of the Levant Company, and probably the designer argued that at all events the east coast of Africa and part of the Guinea coast were included in the sphere of operations of the former body. There were many other allegorical features about the structure, and no doubt it gratified Mr. Pepys, who with his colleagues of the Navy Board was at "Mr. Young's the flag-maker, in Corne-hill" hard by. The arch was vocal as well as ornamental. While

the procession passed, three sailors sang a sea-song, with the chorus :

" All merry boys and loyal,
Our pockets full of pay
This triumphal day,
To make of our skill a tryal,
Of our little, little skill,
(Let none take it ill)
We must have no denyall."

The Restoration of course put Lord Craven in possession of his property once more, including the East India House. Accordingly we find that on July 18, 1660, two of the Committees were told off to attend his lordship for the purpose of obtaining a twenty-one years' lease of the building and of the tenement at the back gate, with the proviso that he should secure the Company against all others that might lay claim to the premises. As regards the past they were willing to pay him whatever the Stock then running had disbursed for rent short of the £200 agreed on in 1648, after deducting the proportion for the tenement, which was not in their hands ; for the future they evidently hoped he would accept £200 a year, which they considered the fair value of the premises. This amount, however, did not satisfy Lord Craven, who intimated in December that he expected £240 per annum, though he was willing to allow the Company the odd £40 for three years towards the cost of repairs. In reply the Committees signified that they considered his demand exorbitant, but that rather than quit the premises they would pay the £240 for seven years, provided he would undertake all the repairs. In January, 1661, as his lordship insisted on his former terms, they requested " warning according to the custome of the City, and so they will leave it " ; but a month later Lord Berkeley was asked to see

Lord Craven and to endeavour to secure a lease on the Company's terms. The upshot of the negotiations is not recorded; but it appears to have been the granting of a lease for twenty-one years at £100 a year rent, and £1000 fine, the Company undertaking to make its own repairs. The rent was assigned before long to Mr. Ralph Marshall, Lord Craven's steward, to whom it was paid direct by the Company from Midsummer, 1667.

In December, 1671, proposals were made for taking a fresh lease from Lord Craven, but nothing was effected. A few years later (July, 1675) the Company lent his lordship £1000, the house being mortgaged as security, subject to the payment of the rent to Mr. Marshall until his death or the termination of the lease. A fresh lease from Lord Craven for twenty-one years from Lady Day, 1676, is briefly mentioned on July 21 of that year; and others for a like period were granted by Lord Craven and Mr. Marshall jointly from March 25, 1678, March 25, 1680, and March 25, 1681.[1] The lease last mentioned lasted till the spring of 1701, when a new one, dated May 26, was procured for a further period of twenty-one years, at a rent of £100 per annum, with a fine of £900.

Meanwhile the Company had spent a considerable sum in improvements and additions to the premises. As already noted, the "great windore" in the Hall had been repaired early in 1659; and on July 23, 1662, the Court ordered two dozen new chairs to be purchased for the "great parlour." The wood and plaster front of the house itself required frequent attention. In May, 1678, some members of the Court were desired to view it and report what repairs were necessary and "what ornament to add

[1] These were probably due to changes in the Trustees named on behalf of the Company.

thereunto." Unfortunately we are not told the nature of their recommendations on the latter point; but possibly the additions consisted of the two coats of arms—those of the Company in front of the balcony and those of the King above. Six years later, repairs were again ordered to "the decayed front of this house"; and in May, 1688, we find the painters and plasterers once more busy. In July of the same year the uppermost balcony was reported to be very defective and not worth repairing, with the result that the Committees in charge of the work were empowered to take it down if they saw fit—as apparently they did. Some outlay had also been found necessary on the little tenement at the back gate. In August, 1670, it was decided to spend £26 in repairing the two rooms over the gatehouse and "laying them to" the adjoining tenement, in order to make the latter a more commodious dwelling; and the premises thus enlarged were assigned (at a rent not stated) as the official residence of Mr. Charles Aston, who was the Keeper of the Pepper Warehouse and Paymaster of the Mariners.

While on the subject it may be well to record briefly the subsequent history of these subsidiary premises. In January, 1675, it was brought to the notice of the Court that Mr. Aston's dwelling, "which hath a door into the backyard of this house," had been broken into and some linen hanging in his yard stolen; whereupon the Committees determined to block up this door—evidently a private one, not the Company's back gate—with bricks and boards; to put new locks on the fore and back gates; and to employ some trusty watchmen to keep ward from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. in winter and from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. in summer, at a fee of twelve pence per night. Six years later Mr. Aston was dismissed, upon the report of the Pepper

Warehouse Committee that his books were in a muddle, not having been balanced since 1672, and that a considerable quantity of pepper was unaccounted for. In September, 1683, his dwelling was assigned to Mr. Edmund Portman, the Cashier-General, "for the security of this House and the Company's treasure under his charge." At the same time it was decided to block up his front door on the Lime Street side and make another opening into the Company's yard. Fourteen years passed and then (September, 1697), Mr. Portman was in his turn disgraced, being called upon to give up his post to Mr. John Du Bois. He was, however, permitted to remain as assistant to Du Bois, "and to continue in his dwelling-house as formerly." In February, 1700, the premises were assigned to Joseph Micklethwait, who succeeded Portman as assistant cashier; and this is the last notice we can trace down to 1719–20, when the house was pulled down to make room for the Company's new warehouses.

The growing trade of the Company soon necessitated an expansion of their premises; and in June, 1683, a committee was appointed to treat for "a parcel of ground in Green Yard adjoining to the further end of the garden belonging to this house . . . for the erecting of warehouses thereon." The result of the negotiations is not stated; but the ground appears to have duly passed into the possession of the Company. Its position will be seen from the key plan given on p. 146, where it is marked F. Three years after (April 30, 1686) we find a committee nominated to consider the erection of a room for melting down and assaying ingots and bars of gold and silver intended for export to India; also to report "what warehouses may be built or spared in and about this house for the viewing, buying, measuring, perching, pressing, and packing" of

cloths and stuffs for export. The decision seems to have been to build a large warehouse on the southern part of the garden, taking in also the plot of ground acquired in 1683.[1] On June 30 we find it resolved "that the breadth of the intended buildings in the garden be carryed out unto the utmost bounds prescrib'd for the same"; and in November the roof of the new warehouse "now erecting in the Company's garden" was directed to be made flat and covered with lead, in order not to annoy Sir Robert Jeffries, who had asked that it should not be carried up to any greater height. It appears to have been a building of two stories (the upper divided into two halves) with cellarage underneath. The ground floor was used for storing cloth; the upper rooms for tea. In 1713 it was decided to move the tea and use the rooms and cellars for storing Private Trade goods; but evidently this order was not carried out, for two years later, some cloth having been stolen, the loss was attributed to the fact that persons coming to view the tea had to pass through the Cloth Warehouse; whereupon the Court resolved to have a distinct pair of steps made to the Tea Warehouse from the garden.

During the period when the Old Company was fighting for existence against its younger rival—the new East India Company, chartered in 1698—there was naturally no talk of further capital outlay on the House or Warehouses; but when in 1709 the amalgamation of the two associations was effected the United Company felt itself in a position

[1] In November, 1712, the Hallkeeper of the Guildhall came down on the Company for thirty-one years' rent at 4s. per annum in respect of "a parcell of common ground near the S.W. corner of a garden late in the tenure of Robert Lee and demised to the Lord Craven for sixty-one years from Christmas, 1661; which ground is now in possession of the Company." The matter was mentioned again in 1719 and 1726, when the Warehouse Committee was empowered to treat with the City, apparently for the purchase of the ground.

to enlarge its cramped boundaries. First, however, it desired to become master in its own house; and, finding that the then Lord Craven was willing to sell, a committee was appointed (July 20, 1709) to treat for the purchase of the building, and of any adjoining houses. As surveyor on the Company's behalf a Mr. Isaac Fryer was employed, his services being remunerated by the very modest sum of four guineas. His valuation is recorded in the first volume of the *Correspondence Memoranda* series at the India Office,[1] but its details are not easy to understand. He allows for a frontage of 21½ feet to Leadenhall Street and of 32½ to Lime Street, or 54 feet in all, and this he values at £1 per foot per annum. Then he takes 169 feet as the dimensions from north to south, and 40 feet from east to west; and these figures, reckoned at 10s. per foot, are added to that for the frontage, making £158, 10s. in all. This annual value is taken at twenty-two years' purchase, giving a total of £3487—apparently for the ground alone, without reckoning the buildings on it. Just before Christmas an agreement was reached by which £4000 was to be paid to his lordship for the property, and on January 6, 1710, the title having been examined and pronounced good, the contract was signed and a warrant for £3500 was passed in part payment of the purchase money. The remaining £500 was to be left at interest for three months, pending the delivery of certain deeds. Possibly Lord Craven was unable to find these documents, for it was not until April, 1732, that any claim was made for the balance of the money. At that date his son, the third Baron Craven, memorialized the Court to pay the remainder. There seems to have been some doubt regarding the completeness of the title,

[1] With it is a rough plan of the ground occupied by the Company's premises at the time. This has been utilized in the key plan.

and a case was stated for counsel's opinion; but, this proving favourable, the £500 was paid (on May 23, 1733) after a release had been obtained from Henry Marshall and a bond of indemnity signed by Lord Craven. Thus Craven House passed finally and completely into the hands of the Company.

Not long after the conclusion of the agreement for the purchase of the House an event occurred which showed how ineffectual were the precautions which the Company had taken for the security of their Treasury. Writing under date of November 1, 1711, Dr. Swift (in his *Journal to Stella*) tells his fair correspondent that "here has been a fellow discovered going out of the East India House with sixteen thousand pounds in money and bills. He would have escaped, if he had not been so uneasy with thirst that he stole out before his time and was caught." The Directors were evidently much alarmed, for they at once instructed the House Committee to consider "about the late breaking open the Treasury, and what was necessary to be done for the further security of the House." The enterprising burglar—whose name, it appears, was Thomas Abraham—was indicted at the sessions and promptly sentenced to death. But he was not destined to "stretch a rope." From his cell in Newgate he addressed petitions to the Company, bewailing his "base and dreadfull crime," and imploring mercy for the sake of his wife and children. Dr. Kennet, then Dean, and afterwards Bishop, of Peterborough, added his intercession, with the result that on December 7, 1711, the Court resolved to memorialize the Queen to grant a reprieve for one month. Their request was granted, but with an intimation that the sentence would be carried out unless the Company would transport the offender to the East Indies and procure

security that he would never return. To this they made some demur, suggesting that he should be sent to the West Indies instead; but Secretary St. John was firm and intimated in reply that only the carrying out of the original intention could save the culprit from the gallows. It was thereupon resolved to ship him to the East, where he was presumably employed as a soldier, in accordance with a further petition from him, expressing his desire to show his gratitude by shedding his blood, if necessary, in defence of the Company's interests. Here, however, all trace of him is lost.

The purchase of the House was followed ere long by several extensions of the premises. In September, 1711, an order was given for completing a room in the garden for the Committee of Buying. Nine months later, on the need for further warehouse room becoming apparent, a Committee was appointed to treat with Mr. Thomas Marshall for the purchase of the houses adjoining, and to consider the acquisition of certain tenements contiguous to the backyard. One result of their efforts is shown by an agreement in May, 1712, to purchase the two houses "at the Gate" in Leadenhall Street from Mr. Marshall. The sum agreed upon was £1500, and a warrant for the payment of this amount was passed on March 25, 1713. The two houses were situated one on each side of the Company's premises; one, an alehouse called the *Ship*, adjoined westward on the East India House; the other was a private dwelling known as the *Bell* and occupied by a Mr. Christopher Burroughs. For the present both tenants were left in possession at a rental.

In July, 1713, a proposal to build a counting-house in the foreyard was negatived; but in the following November sanction was given to the erection of a room on the leads

over the Transfer Office, to measure 25 feet by 10½, and to be used "to lay the Indian books in, there not being room in the Accomptants' Office for the same."[1] Three years later nine houses in Lime Street contiguous to the Company's property and near their back gate were offered to the Court, and after some negotiation were purchased of Robert Brigginshaw for £4823, 14s. (April 1717). The following month one of them was let to a Mr. Beachcroft at £45 a year; in the case of the rest the existing tenants were perforce allowed to remain, as they had long leases. A little later (1719–20) the Accountant's Office was enlarged at a cost of nearly £900.[2]

In the spring of 1722 we find the Company deliberating upon the erection of new warehouses on part of the ground they had acquired. The cost was estimated at £2025, if the buildings were to be of four stories, or £2420 if they were to be of five, the decision on this point being left to a joint assembly of the Committees of the House and of the Warehouses. To improve the site, a freehold house in

[1] Apparently little or no care had hitherto been taken of the Company's records. In April, 1682, we find mention made of "old books and papers which are in a confused manner layd in the upper garret of the House"; but what became of them is not stated. A few years after the arrangement mentioned above—which was probably for the Accountant-General's records only—one of the Surat journals was found to have been cut out of its covers and stolen, and the statement was also made that "great quantities of the Company's packets and other papers were thrown on heaps in the back warehouse." This led to the appointment of a committee to select a proper place for keeping these documents, with some one to look after them; but evidently nothing much resulted, for on March 25, 1720, the Court was "moved to consider what was to be done with great numbers of papers, packets, and old books removed out of the Secretary's, Accomptant's, and other offices of the House and carryed into the warehouse on the other side of the garden, where they lye in the utmost confusion, and it is feared many of them are destroyed." Thereupon it was ordered "that the Secretary do take care to have the said papers sorted and put into a proper repository."

[2] In 1721 Mr. Burroughs was allowed £30 off his arrears of rent in satisfaction of his claim that the new addition darkened his back warehouse.

Lime Street, occupied by a shoemaker named Baxter, was purchased from Mr. Samuel Freebody for £305, 5s.; the lease of the *Queen's Head* alehouse in the same street was acquired; and a sum of £54 was given for the remainder of the lease of a small house near the back gate, for the site of which a new lease was taken from the parish of St. Andrew Undershaft at Midsummer, 1722. The erection of the new warehouses must have commenced at once, for over £4400 had been spent on them by Lady Day, 1724; and by the beginning of 1725 no less than ten houses in Lime Street Ward had been replaced by warehouses for the Company's goods.

The rebuilding of the East India House demands a chapter to itself; but before dealing with that subject we may pause to say a few words regarding the internal arrangements of the building which was now doomed to destruction. Here we must walk very warily, for there is little to guide us. On the eastern side, and at the back of the House, was the General Court Room, with two doors; so at least we infer from an entry in June, 1712, when the Court, taking into consideration that the back gate must necessarily be open practically all day long, "by reason whereof the House is a common thorowfare to all sorts of people," ordered that for the future "the door leading out of the Generall Court Room towards the back gate be locked up, and each of the doorkeepers have a key thereto, to open it on all occasions as the Directors shall order; and that a bell be fastened at the said door or at the door of the Court Room leading into the garden, for giving notice to the doorkeepers to open the same to any of the Directors or such others as this Court shall allow the priviledge of passing through the House." In this "Great Hall," as it is sometimes called, the periodical sales were held,

special platforms being erected on each occasion (*Court Minutes*, March 24, 1675). By an order made in March, 1685, no bidder was allowed to be "on the hustings, or within the barr where the Court sits, unless he be or have been one of the Committees, a magistrate of this city, or an Assistant of the Royal African Company." Later on (September, 1718), "past and present Directors of this Company, the Bank, or the South Sea Company," were permitted to bid from within the hustings at sales, "provided they speak audibly." The ordinary meetings of the Directors seem also to have been held in the same apartment, for on one occasion we find it arranged that during a sale the Court should meet in the "little parlour"; and the latter room was thereupon ordered to be made more commodious, with a view to its being utilized for courts or for meetings of committees. This "parlour"—the Directors of the Bank of England still assemble in "the Bank Parlour"—thereupon became the Court Room, as distinguished from the General Court Room. In August, 1714, we may note, a new clock was to be "provided and placed in the Court Room, and . . . made to go a month,

The Old (London) East India Company's Clock - now in the India Office Treasury

and the Chairman or Deputy to have the keeping of the key." It is possible that this is the clock which (with new works) did duty later on in the Marine Department, and is now in the Treasury at the India Office. Its predecessor, which had for forty years adorned the Court Room, was bestowed upon "Oliver Hawkins, one of the doorkeepers."

The clerks' offices, it would seem, occupied not only the remainder of the ground floor, but also a part or the whole of the floor above. A poor hanger-on of the establishment in 1712 petitioned the Court for an allowance, on the ground that for three years he had daily carried down the principal books for deposit in the safe as a precaution against fire. A gratuity of £5 was bestowed upon him, but he was informed that his services would not be required in future, as it was the business of the clerks to bring down their books themselves.

As we have seen, the garrets were in part given up to the records and other lumber. Considering the comparative smallness of the building, one might have thought that every cranny had now been accounted for; but our ancestors had a wonderful way of packing themselves closely together, and so we are not surprised to learn that, in addition to all these offices, room was found in the building and its appurtenances for several of the Company's servants and their families. The doorkeepers, of course, resided on the premises. The Cashier-General, who was responsible for the money in the Treasury and was expected to make good all losses, was admitted to have a claim to free quarters, and in 1676 the Company paid him £80 as compensation for not having been able to spare him rooms during the past two years. Possibly the then occupant of the post preferred to live elsewhere, for in 1680 we find his assistant, Richard Harris, residing in the House instead.

This worthy, who held the double post of Assistant Cashier and "Housekeeper," [1] seems to have made the most of his opportunities by taking into his rooms a miscellaneous assortment of relatives, whose proximity to the Company's cash-box caused the Court some uneasiness. They therefore directed him to turn out his son-in-law, Mr. Castle, and in future to allow none but his wife, daughter, grandchild, and maid to lodge in the House. At the same time, one of the Committees (who was probably living close at hand) was asked to notice "what persons doe frequently resort to this house on the Lords Daies or at other unseasonable times, and report the same unto the Court." Later on, these rooms appear to have been allotted to the Assistant Secretary, Thomas Woolley, who also undertook the duties of the Housekeeper; and this arrangement was continued when in July, 1701, on the death of Robert Blackborne, Woolley was promoted to the post of Secretary, except that he was allowed to hand over the duties of Housekeeper to his wife, who was formally appointed "at the usual salary." When Mrs. Woolley died (May, 1724) her husband once again took up the latter post.

One final extract before we take our leave of this branch of our subject: it is amusing both for the reason given by the parish authorities for calling upon the Company to contribute and for the ingenuity with which the Committees, while making a liberal contribution, evaded the creation of what might prove an embarrassing precedent: "It being represented unto this Court that the Churchwardens of this parish were attending without to receive

[1] Harris had been appointed Housekeeper in August, 1661, upon the death of Spiller. In the following December his salary in this capacity was fixed at £20, and he was required to discharge the duties of Beadle as well. He was provided with an assistant at 10s. a week, who was to be in constant attendance from the rising to the setting of the watch.

their benevolence upon a brief lately granted by His Majesty, on account of their making use of this house for transacting the Companies affairs, which otherwise would be inhabited by some person of quality : it was resolved that £5 be paid them out of the poore's box, not with respect to the Companies interest in this house, but as the sufferers by the late fire have had dealings and commerce with this Company " (*Minutes*, December 22, 1671). And as we have touched on matters ecclesiastical, let us here record that on June 3, 1724, the Company subscribed twenty guineas towards beautifying the parish church (St. Andrew Undershaft) with an altarpiece.

IV

THE PLAGUE AND THE GREAT FIRE

IN the year 1665 the shadow of the Great Plague falls across the records. It was not by any means the earliest visitation of that dread disease, even during the Company's comparatively brief existence. In 1603 Sir James Lancaster's fleet had returned to find London sore stricken with pestilence; and in the very first letter written by the "Committees" to their servants in the East (December, 1603) this topic is dwelt upon. After narrating the death of Queen Elizabeth and the peaceable accession of the "Kinge of Scotts," the letter proceeds: "Notwithstandinge since, as tymes have their chandges and as God doth many tymes humble His people lest they should forgett thèmselves in prosperitie, yt hath pleased Him to chastice this kingdomes with greate sicknes and mortalitie in divers places thereof, espetiallie in the cittie of London, where there hath died betweene the 7 of December, 1602, and the first of December, 1603, 38,138 people within the cittie of London and the liberties and suburbes of the same, and (as may appeare by the bills of the weeklie reporte of people deceased) their died in one weeke in the cittie, liberties, and suburbes 3,385 persons; by occasion of which mortalitie trade hath utterlie ceased within the cittie for almost this halfe yeare, and merchaunts and all others of any estate and accompt have departed into the countrie; yet now, God be thanked, doe resorte

unto the cittie againe, the contagion being well seased, soe as the nomber that now die of al diseases in the cittie and suburbs are aboute 200 a weeke." And just as the reign of the first Stuart had been inaugurated with plague, so the accession of his successor was signalized by a similar outbreak; and this visitation, which was lengthy but not so severe as the previous one, was followed by fresh epidemics in 1630 and 1637. All of these, however, paled into insignificance when compared with the "Great Plague" of 1665.

At the beginning of July, when, although the dread disease had not established itself in the City, it was raging in the western and northern suburbs and the exodus of frightened Londoners was rapidly increasing, we find the East India House clerks permitted to stay away for the first half of each week unless specially summoned, the reason given being that business was dull. In the same month the Governor (Sir William Thomson) quitted the City, and did not return till the following January; and on August 25 the Secretary obtained leave to go into the country "during this time of greivous sicknesse," his brother being accepted as his substitute. A sum of £100 was set aside for the relief of the sufferers, and on July 28, £10 of this was handed over to Mr. Harris "for him to dispose of part to the three watchmen whose houses are visited; and for releife of such other persons relateing to the Company as shall stand in need, according as hee shall thinck fitt, keeping an accompt thereof." A further £15 was distributed during the sickness, and the balance was divided later on among those of the Company's servants or their relatives who had suffered. Weekly courts were maintained during August and September, though the number of Committees attending dwindled from six to two, and at the last meeting,

owing to "want of a greater appearance," it was "resolved not to meete againe till further directions from the Governour, unless urgent occasion should happen unexpectedly." A letter to Surat dated September 18 mentioned that the Court had authorized any five or more of its members to act for the whole body.

The state of London during these few months has been drawn for us by a master hand in Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*, and it is unnecessary to enlarge on so well-known and gruesome a topic. The long neglect of sanitary precautions, in spite of the repeated warnings afforded by previous visitations, had brought a bitter punishment on the City. The dark, rickety dwellings huddled closely together; the primitive methods of disposing of sewage; the use of water from a polluted river or from wells near choked-up graveyards; the personal uncleanliness that prevailed—all these provided an excellent breeding-ground for an epidemic, and the importation of plague-germs was all that was needed to produce a frightful devastation. A succinct but vivid account of its effects is contained in Pepys's letter to Lady Carteret, written from Woolwich on September 4, 1665. "I . . . stayed in the City till above 7,400 died in one week, and of them above 6,000 of the plague, and little noise heard day and night but tolling of bells: till I could walk Lumber Street and not meet twenty persons from the one end to the other, and not fifty upon the Exchange: till whole families (ten or twelve together) have been swept away: till my very physician (Dr. Burnet), who undertook to secure me against any infection (having survived the month of his own being shut up), died himself of the plague; till the nights (though much lengthened) are grown too short to conceal the burials of those that died the day before, people being thereby

constrained to borrow daylight for that purpose: lastly, till I could find neither meat nor drink safe, the bucheries being everywhere visited, my brewer's house shut up, and my baker with his whole family dead of the plague."

After this striking vignette, the Company's description —written a fortnight later to their factors at Madras— seems poor and vague; but it is interesting as showing the state of alarm produced by the visitation: "It hath pleased the Almightie, for the greate and multiplyed sins of our nation, to manifest His greate and feirce indignacion against us by sending and continuing amongst us the plague of pestilence, which at present hath spread itselfe in most parts of the kingdome, but more espetially rageth in and about the Citty and suburbs, wherein have dyed this weeke 7,200 persons. The God of mercy have compassion on us and withdrawe this heavy judgment from us, give us a true sight of our sins, sincere repentance for what is past, reformation and amendment for the time to come, that soe the voice of joy and gladnesse may againe bee heard amongst us and that wee may praise the name of the Lord. This greate mortallity hath caused most part of the Committee to withdrawe from the Citty, and thereby have not opertunity to meete togither to consider and direct affaires. It is our hopes that before our intended shipp will bee readie to saile toward you that the Lord will in mercy looke downe upon this poore nation and withdrawe His afflicting hand, that thereby wee may againe have the happinesse and freedome of meeteing togither; and then (God willing) wee shall give you such further directions as wee shall finde necessary."

As the pestilence grew worse, it was decided to shut up the East India House altogether for a time; but this was prevented by pressure of business, and the few Com-

mittees left in town struggled gamely on. Some meetings were held in October at Sir George Smith's house, and on the 20th of that month a General Court was called at the mansion of Mr. Peter Vandeputt (one of the Committees) "at Clapton in Surrey" [*sic*]. In return for the accommodation thus afforded, the Company later on presented Mrs. Vandeputt with silks and fine calicoes to the value of £20, though her husband at first refused to permit anything of the sort, as he understood that some members of the Company had grumbled on hearing of the proposal. The number of Committees requisite to form a quorum had now been lowered to three, but in spite of this several meetings were called without the necessary number appearing.

At last matters began to mend. On December 18 the Court wrote again to Madras, and this time they had better news to send. "After a long and heavy judgment of the Almighty upon this nation in the plague of pestilence, wherein many thousands have beene taken away, it hath now pleased Him in a very greate measure to withdrawe His afflicting hand; this last weekes bill of mortallity in the Citty and parts adjacent amounting to but 428, whereof 210 of the plague; for which His greate mercy wee desire to magnifie His name, and that wee and the whole nation may with humble and thanckfull hearts acknowledg our deliverances, whoe have most justly deserved the continuance of His greatest judgments amongst us. Wee heerewith send you a gennerall bill of this yeares mortallity to this time."

By the beginning of the new year many of the citizens had returned, and business was slowly reviving. On January 12 a special vote of thanks was passed to those Committees who had remained in town during the visi-

tation; and five days later gratuities of from £30 to £125 were distributed to the officials who had in like manner stuck to their posts. In spite of the troubles, the Company's transactions had been extraordinarily successful; for at the end of March the shareholders were gladdened by the declaration of a dividend of fifty per cent, of which ten per cent was to be paid immediately and the rest in the following February.

The Fire which followed the Plague gave the Company a great fright, but luckily did it comparatively little harm. Here is the Court's account of it, contained in a letter to Madras dated September 14, 1666: "It pleased God that on the second of this moneth, being Sunday, in the morning a most fearefull and dreadfull fire brake forth, which hath consumed the greatest part of the Citty of London, even from Tower Dock to Temple Barr, and almost all within the walls, except part of Marke Lane, Bishopsgate Streete, Leadenhall Streete, part of Broad Streete, and some by the Wall towards Mooregate and Criplegate, and part by Christ Church; the sight whereof was exceeding afrightning and astonishing. The Lord afect us with this sadd judgment, that wee may seriously consider what it is to fall into His hands in a way of His displeasure; for when Hee goeth forth to execute judgment, whose hands can be strong or whose hearts can indure? And if so dreadfull in His temporall, how much more in His eternall? And therefore wee humbly begg that the Lord would humble us, this nation and citty, for our great synns, that have provoked the breaking forth of His feirce anger against us, and that wee may now meete Him by true repentance and reformation of whatever is amisse in the midest of us, that the Lord may delight in us, to build us up and dwell amongst us. In this sad callamity

God was pleased to bee very favourable to the Companies intrest, having preserved most of our goods, excepting some saltpeeter and our pepper at the Exchange cellar."

During the conflagration the books and all the goods that could be got at were hurried down to Stepney, where they were stowed in the houses or gardens of Dr. William Clark (Vicar of Stepney, 1662–79, and also Dean of Winchester, 1665–79), Mr. Crowther, and Captain John Proud. In the Petty Cash book for the period we find several entries of money paid to men for watching the goods at Dr. Clark's, the final entry being on October 13, when the last cartload was brought back. One merchant at least seems to have come in a panic to remove his own goods from the Company's warehouse, and to have been denied, for on September 2 occurs the entry: "paid given to a file of musquiters that gaurded the warehowse dore when Mr. George Day came to demaund his goods, hee fearing they would have bin burnt in Leadenhall." The next day appears to have been the actual date of removal. The sum of 3s. 6d. was given "to the red coates that prest carts to carry goods from Leadenhall to the Blewhowse," and the actual cartage thither (52 bales of cloth) cost £2, 12s. In addition there were donations of 12s. "to six men that pumpt all day," and 3s. "given the men to drink that were at the pumpe and the weomen that sweept the kinnell," besides 2s. "given the porters to drinke and for myself and Captain Proud." On the 6th two carmen employed to carry nine bales to Dr. Clark's received 36s.; and two days later there is a payment of 5s. to "two men that removed the bales from the walls at Leadenhall for feare it should fly out."

When the danger was over the services of those who had rendered help were suitably acknowledged, as shown

by the following entries: "The Court being acquainted that some gentlemen of the Committee that were in the way when the sadd accident of fire happened, which threatned noe lesse then an universall ruine of these parts, had taken upon them through their care and greate prudence to direct the removing of the treasure, bookes, papers, and divers goodes, and allso the disburse of monies upon the emergency of the severall occasions: and that here being a Court now, it was fitt they should bee indemnified for what they had done: the Court, having a true sence of their indefatigable paines and sympathie of the Companies concerns in such a juncture, did highly approve of what they had done and returned them heartie thanckes. And then the Court ordered that the treasure, bookes, paper[s] and goods bee now returned backe againe" (*Court Minutes*, September 10, 1666). "It was ordered that Captaine Disher should be paid £25 for carriage of 15 loades of goodes to Stepney and Mile Ende in the time of the greate exigency by fire. Sir Samuell Barnardiston, Sir William Ryder,[1] Sir George Smyth, Mr. Thomson, Major Thomson, [and] Mr. Albyn were desired by the Court to consider of gratifieing all such persons as have deserved by doeing the Company service in the late time of extremitie, when a totall ruine was feared by the violence of the flames, and reporte their opinions thereupon to the Court" (*Ibid.*, September 12, 1666).

Fears were still entertained that the fire might break out again, and no precaution against such a contingency was neglected. "The Court, conceiving it very necessary to

[1] To whose house at Bethnal Green Pepys removed his valuables, "riding myself in my nightgown in the cart; and Lord! to see how the streets and the highways are crowded with people running and riding and getting of carts at any rate to fetch away things."

continue a watch at such places where there may remayne any danger to them by the fire, desired the Committees to take it by turnes and two of them to sitt up in this House every night as long as there shall bee occasion, to oversee and direct what they shall thinke convenient to preserve the Companies interest and the generall safetie, and to continue such a number of watchmen as they shall judge fitting for that purpose" (*Ibid.*, September 14, 1666).

As a matter of fact, though the Fire came as near as the eastern end of Cornhill on the one hand and half-way up Lime Street on the other, it spared both the East India House itself and the Company's warehouses in the Leaden Hall. Their pepper stored in the cellars under the Royal Exchange was, however, largely destroyed, though a considerable sum was spent in endeavouring to save it and in recovering the remains. From the General Ledger for 1664-69 it appears that the total "charges occasioned by the late dreadful fire" came to £749, 9s. 3d., and this amount was written off to Profit and Loss.

One effect of the conflagration was to create a great demand for quarters for the shopkeepers and others whose dwellings had been burnt. "The Court having been much importuned to breake the front of this house and accomodate some tradesmen with shoppes, and the Comittee now taking a view of the place and considering thereof, and apprehending it might bee very unfitt and inconvenient for the Company to doe any such thinge: Resolved not to parcell or lett out any part of this house for the present" (*Court Minutes*, September 19, 1666).

Another result was the nervousness shown henceforth by the Company on the subject of fire. In May, 1676, measures were taken to register the addresses of all the clerks, and orders were given to them that should a fire

break out anywhere in the City they were at once to repair to the office for the purpose of safeguarding the Company's property. As far back as April, 1655, the Company had contributed £4 to a fund for providing a fire-engine for the Ward; now (February, 1677) it was determined that 20s. should be given towards the cost of "an engine for quenching of fire, which the Ward is now building; and that when it is finished permission be granted for the keeping of it in this house in such place as shalbe most convenient." [1] As a further precaution, early in 1682 the East India House was ordered to be insured "with the City of London" for £2000 for twenty-one years. Apparently the fire-engine of 1677 was worn out by January, 1684, for then the Court resolved to contribute £5 towards the purchase of two new ones, "so as one of these engines do constantly remaine in the yard of this house." Probably it was stationed in the little court in front of the main building. For the better protection of the warehouses six dozen leather buckets were ordered in November, 1688; and when in the following July a fire broke out in Mincing Lane, the Company gave half a crown apiece to the thirteen watchmen who assembled at the East India House and assisted to carry the engine to the scene of the conflagration.

Seven years later there was an outbreak at the East India House itself: "The Governour acquainting the Court with the late sad accident of the fire that broke forth in the Secretary's office, and God's mercifull deliverance vouchsafed in that exigency, and how instrumentall William Izard, one of their porters, had been in extinguishing the same, to his very great hazard and perill: and that by the timely discovery made thereof by Mrs.

[1] Possibly this was one of the "engines with leathern pipes for quenching fire" which were patented in 1676 (Timbs's *Curiosities of London*, p. 298).

Woolley [wife of the Housekeeper] and her nurse much mischief was prevented : the Court were pleased to order that the Committee for this House do give her a small peice of plate as an acknowledgment of her great care, and one guiney to her nurse : as also that the sum of ten pounds be given to the said William Izard for his great pains, industry, and care taken in that service."

In February, 1717, there was a fresh alarm, owing to one of the chimneys catching fire ; and the Court thereupon ordered three more fire-engines for their warehouses to be procured from Holland.

In their dread of fire the Company kept a vigilant eye on all that went on in the neighbourhood, as witnessed by the following entry : " It being represented to the Court that some youths and others in Leadenhall Market have made it a practice in sport to catch weasels and, daubing them over with oyl of turpentine or spirit of wine and seting the same on fire, have turned them loose, by which means the Company's warehouses there may be exposed to great danger by the weasels returning thither, from whence it is believed they came : ordered that it be referred to the Committee of Warehouses to examine matter of fact and apply such remedys for preventing a repetition of such dangerous practices as they judge proper " (*Court Minutes*, January 3, 1722). And again, in June, 1728, we find the Company's solicitor instructed to prosecute two persons accused of " setting fire to a dog anointed with combustible stuff . . . whereby the whole neighbourhood were exposed to great danger."

V

THE WEAVERS' RIOTS

TO the dread of fire and robbers was added towards the close of the century a fresh cause of alarm in the shape of mob violence; and this was a far more formidable danger to meet, owing to the absence of any proper protection on the part of the authorities. There was of course nothing in the shape of a police force—the Dogberries of the time are not worth mentioning in this connexion—and the only means of suppressing a serious outbreak was by employing the Guards or mustering the Trained Bands of the City and Westminster—a slow and cumbrous process in an emergency.

The riots of 1696–97 were the result of abnormal distress among the weavers of Spitalfields. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes had driven to this country a large number of Huguenot artisans who had settled down at various places, including the East of London, and had founded a flourishing manufacture of silks. Of late, however, the demand for these goods had fallen off; and this was attributed by the weavers to the fact that the East India Company were importing and selling manufactured silks at a price much lower than that at which the home-made product could be offered.[1] Somewhat parallel was

[1] As early as 1681 complaints had been made to Parliament on this score (see Macpherson's *European Commerce with India*, p. 136, and the pamphlet by "Philopatris," issued by the Company in the same year).

the outcry which was being raised by the dyers and linen-drapers against the importation of calicoes already stained or printed, which threatened, they alleged, the destruction of an important English industry; while behind these again stood the Turkey Company (aggrieved at the competition of raw silk brought from the East Indies) and the general body of woollen manufacturers, who exclaimed impartially against all kinds of silk and cotton goods as injuring their own business. In deference to popular clamour, a bill was introduced into Parliament in March, 1696, to restrain the wearing of silks, printed calicoes, etc., imported from the East Indies. Witnesses from Spitalfields deposed to the injury inflicted on their industry by the importation of Indian silks; "when the East India ships come in," said one, "half our weavers play." On the other hand it was declared that if the bill passed the silk-dyers, who had as much right to be considered as the weavers, would lose the benefit of dyeing the India white silks; and that as regards calicoes, only five per cent of those imported were already stained or printed, and that any impediment put in the way of their use would merely benefit the German and Scotch linen manufacturers. Influenced by these arguments, the Committee amended the bill by postponing its operation for three years and by striking out the clauses relating to printed calicoes and "Bengals." Perhaps the promoters were unwilling to proceed with the measure as thus emasculated, for the bill was thereupon allowed to drop.[1]

However, as the year wore on the distress among the weavers increased, and at last they lost patience. On

[1] *Report of the Historical MSS. Commission on the MSS. of the House of Lords*, 1695–97, p. 238.

November 24, 1696, Luttrell tells us in his *Relation* (vol. iv. p. 144), "some hundreds of silk weavers went to Westminster to petition the Parliament against the East India Company for bringing over great quantities of wrought silks to the prejudice of their trade." Their demonstration was not without effect, for a week later a fresh bill was brought into the Commons on much the same lines as the former one. It met, of course, with strong opposition from the interests likely to be affected, but in spite of this the bill got through the Committee stage on January 12, 1697. Then came a stand, and it was rumoured that the measure would be abandoned. Maddened by this fear, on Thursday, the 21st, the Spitalfields weavers, with their wives and children, to the number of five thousand, marched suddenly to Westminster and mobbed the House of Commons. The scene is graphically described in a letter from one of the members, Mr. William Fleming, printed in the twelfth report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission (Part vii. p. 346): "Though I wrote to you the last post, yet a thing having this day happened that may make much noise, I think myself obliged to give you the true state of it. There is a bill depending in our House for prohibiting the wearing of East India silks, which should have been read yesterday, but (the House being engaged in the Capitation Bill) it was put off till Monday week—too long a day if all our House were hearty for it, but many are not. This long delay occasioned the weavers' wives, to the number of four or five thousand, and great many joining with them, to come in a tumultuous manner to the House of Commons to desire the passing of the said bill. They came down a little before eleven o'clock. I think I was one of the first that met them; for being come down out of the Speaker's chamber to go into the lobby

to take my votes, I met them on the stairs, and asking the occasion of their coming in such a manner, and they hastening forwards, I called to Mr. Francis Massam, who was coming behind me, to shut the door, which he did. Three got by me, and two by him; but the rest I stopped and satisfied to return. So we stopped their passage that way, and locked the lowest door. But they being got into the lobby pressed so hard to go into the House that they had much ado to keep them out; the doors were forced to be locked up. The City members sent [went ?] out to them, the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex were sent for, and some votes made. In truth those members that had been against the bill were in great fear, but those that were for it might pass and repass at pleasure. About five o'clock one that had been a solicitor for the bill got them to go back, and we are now at quiet. They were pressing at the doors of the House of Lords, but what they have done as yet I know not. Whether they will go home, or to the East India House, or visit us again, I know not; but we that were for the bill are under no apprehension of harm, for they would make a lane when any they knew to be their friends passed."

The fear that the East India Company would be the next sufferers was only too well grounded. Luttrell (*op. cit.*, p. 174) tells us that the same evening "the weavers, after they came from Westminster, attackt the East India House and broke open the outward doors, but the Lord Mayor and Sherifs comeing dispersed them, and three were committed to Newgate; since which the Trayn'd Bands are out and now all is quiet." The Company's minutes tell us little about the tumult, except that at a meeting held on the following day the thanks of the Court were voted to the Lord Mayor and others for their timely

assistance, while twenty guineas were given to the officers of the Sheriffs, and three to a man injured in the affray. Further, a committee was appointed to devise means for strengthening the gates and doors of the House, and for securing the treasure.

To resume the history of the bill. On February 2 the second reading was carried by 166 votes to 134, and three days later it was read a third time by the narrow margin of one vote. On the 8th it was introduced into the Lords, where evidence was taken both for and against the proposal, with the result that in Committee the scope of the measure was considerably widened. The proposed penalties were increased and the operation of the bill was extended to all foreign silks and printed calicoes, East Indian or otherwise. Thus amended, it was returned to the Commons, who promptly disagreed with these alterations, on the ground that the increase of the penalties infringed their privileges and that the extension to other than Indian goods would damage the export trade. The Lords, however, insisted on their amendments, and after some fruitless conferences the bill was abandoned.

These proceedings were eagerly followed by the weavers. Early in February a gift of £2000 from King William had done something to assuage their misery; but when the prospects of the bill seemed hopeless they rang the tocsin for another assault on the India House. On Saturday, March 20, Luttrell notes in his diary that: "The Commons ordered an addresse to His Majestie forthwith to suppresse the tumults with the militia or otherwise, the weavers being up last night again in a riotous manner, upon a notion that their bill was lost in the House of Lords. They assaulted the house of Mr. Bohun in Spittle feilds, a Member

of Parliament and Deputy Governour [1] of the East India Company, with stones, clubbs, etc.; upon which those within fired upon them, killed two, and wounded others; and some companies of Train'd Bands comeing, they dispers't." And three days later he tells us that: "Yesterday near 3,000 of the weavers gott together in the feilds near Hackney and threatned Sir Josia Childs house; [2] but the guards watching them narrowly, and the presse masters carrying several young fellows on board that were goeing to join them, caused them to disperse."

Parallel with these outbreaks of violence ran a more peaceful war of pamphlets, mostly anonymous. In 1696 appeared an *Essay on the East India Trade*, the writer of which, while affecting impartiality, argued strongly against any change in the existing system. He declared that the English silk and linen manufacturers could never supply the wants of the home market, and that, as the public insisted on having such goods, it was better to bring them from the East Indies than to purchase them from European rivals. To lop off this branch of the Company's trade would, he contended, be fatal to the rest, and then England would lose half its foreign business. An answer to this was issued in 1697, which averred that the Indian silks did far more injury to the woollen trade at home than those imported from France and Holland; that unless we were prepared to take French silks and German linens in exchange for our woollens, our trade with those countries must greatly suffer; and finally that the Company's importation

[1] A slip of Luttrell's. Mr. George Bohun was really the Governor of the Company. The latter voted him £500 towards making good his losses (*Court Minutes*, April 12 and 16, 1697).

[2] At Wanstead. In 1673 Child had bought the manor and the old manor house. The latter was pulled down by his son in 1715, and the magnificent mansion known as Tylney Hall was erected in its place.

of raw silk from the East was very detrimental to English commerce with Italy and Turkey. A third pamphlet by T. S. (1697), in favour of the bill for prohibiting Indian silks, etc., made similar assertions, and in addition laid particular stress on the fact that the competition of these fabrics kept wages in the woollen and silk industries at starvation rates.

With such arguments dinned into their ears and with a formidable agitation on foot, it is no wonder that Members of Parliament began to look askance at this branch of the Company's commerce. In April, 1700, an Act (11 & 12 William III, c. 10) was passed, forbidding, from Michaelmas, 1701, the use or wearing of "all wrought silks, Bengalls, and stuffs mixed with silk or herba, of the manufacture of Persia, China, or East India, and all calicoes painted, dyed, printed or stained there." Any such goods found in a house or shop were to be forfeited, while the seller or person responsible was made liable to a fine of £200. The importation of these fabrics was still permitted, but only with a view to re-exportation to the Continent and elsewhere, pending which they were to be locked up in special warehouses. As a concession to the merchants engaged in the trade, the duty hitherto levied was to be reduced by the amount of the drawback allowed on re-exportation. At the same time a fresh duty of 15 per cent on East India silks, muslins, and calicoes of all descriptions was imposed, with an allowance of full drawback on exportation (11 & 12 William III, c. 3, and c. 11 of the following session).

It might be thought that the shrewd blows thus dealt at a prominent feature of their commerce would have much disheartened the East India merchants; but this was not so. In sending out to Madras copies of the new Acts, the Old Company wrote (June 18, 1700):

"After Michaelmas, 1701, the above-mentioned commodityes pay no custom but the 2½ per cent half subsidy; by which means we can the better bear their lying in the warehouse for a markett. We don't forbid your providing those sorts of goods, because we would not loose any of the fabricks, and because we can't imagine the Parliament will long continue this prohibition, which we take to be no better than laying a tax upon the nation by obliging them to buy commodityes answering these sorts at 50 to 100 per cent dearer. But if they should, yet the forraign marketts will in all likelyhood take off what we import from India and China, if cheap bought there."

In point of fact, any loss in this direction was likely to be made up to a great extent by an increased demand for raw silk and plain calicoes for the use of the home manufacturers; and we find that instructions were sent out to the factors in Persia and Bengal to buy all the raw silk they could get, and to those at Surat to provide increased quantities of cotton yarn and white calicoes. At the same time it is interesting to note the Company's determination not to allow the new measure to hinder the development of the chintz industry at Fort St. George. In a letter sent thither in August, 1700, directions were given that, while no more chintzes were to be bought at Masulipatam for the home market, "whatsoever you can make within our own territoryes, let them be sent us; because we would rather suffer some loss than check a hopefull beginning capable of great improvement; although we think such sumptuary laws can never last long."

The woollen manufacturers, silk weavers, and calico printers had now been relieved of all fear of competition from the East Indies; but before very long they commenced to quarrel among themselves. The steps taken to

prevent the sale in England of India-printed calicoes entirely failed in their intended purpose of promoting the use of woollens in their place; and the consequent complaints of the merchants affected were voiced in a report made to Parliament by the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations in November, 1702 (*Report on House of Lords MSS.*, 1702–04, p. 71). "We are informed by several merchants concerned in the woollen trade that the prohibiting of painted calicoes from India to be consumed in England has not had the desired success; for, though it was hoped that this prohibition would have discouraged the consumption of those goods, we find that the allowing calicoes unstained to be brought in has occasioned such an increase of the printing and staining calicoes here, and the printers and painters have brought that art to such perfection, that it is more prejudicial to us than it was before the passing that Act. For whereas then the calicoes painted in India were most used by the better sort of people, whilst the poor continued to wear and use our woollen goods, the calicoes now printed in England are so very cheap and so much in fashion that persons of all qualities and degrees clothe themselves and furnish their houses in a great measure with them." Complaint was further made that the India-printed calicoes, not being allowed a vent in England, were re-exported to the American colonies, thus lessening the demand from thence for woollen goods; while the Turkey merchants chimed in with allegations that their trade was being ruined by the importation of raw silk from India, bought at a third of the cost of theirs, and that consequently their exportation of woollen goods to the Levant was endangered.

No notice having been taken of these representations, the Commissioners repeated them almost verbatim five

years later (*Report on House of Lords MSS.*, 1706–08, p. 250). Yet still Parliament hesitated. It was no longer a question of excluding foreign goods that competed with an important home manufacture; the decision to be taken was whether the rising calico-printing industry was to be crushed in the interests of the woollen trade, with the risk of incurring odium from the public, who had clearly shown a preference for the cheaper and more attractive article. Still, the agitation was continued, and much feeling was excited against the East India Company, particularly among the silk-weavers of Spitalfields, whose anger was directed against its supplying the raw materials for the printed calicoes that competed so disastrously with the products of their own looms. In June, 1719, there were several riots, sternly suppressed by the authorities; and in the following May we find the Directors greatly exercised over "the weavers' threatning insults." By way of precaution twenty additional watchmen were engaged; the Chairman was asked to give special instructions for securing the East India House; and orders were issued that all books of importance were to be locked up at night in the "Stone Room."

At last the pressure from the combined interests became too great for Parliament to withstand, and it was decided to sacrifice the calico-printing industry, so far as the home market was concerned. In 1720 an Act (7 Geo. I, c. 7) was passed, which, after declaring that the use of printed or dyed calicoes tended to the great detriment of the woollen and silk manufacturers and to the excessive increase of the poor, imposed from Christmas, 1722, a penalty of £5 on anyone found wearing such stuffs, a mulct of £20 on any seller of them, and a like penalty for making use of those fabrics in beds or other furniture. These disabilities

applied to printed stuffs only partly composed of cotton; but muslins, neck-cloths, and fustians were excepted, and a like favour was extended to calicoes dyed all blue.

The result was a severe check to the industry, which was in consequence for a time diverted largely to the printing of linens. In 1736, however, an Act (9 Geo. II, c. 4) was obtained, which declared that stuffs made in Great Britain of linen yarn as warp, even though containing cotton, were to be regarded as fustians and therefore exempt from the penalties of the previous statute; and this concession gave a further field for the ingenuity of the calico-printers. About 1770 the process of manufacture was revolutionized by the inventions of Hargreaves and Arkwright; and the impetus thus given to the cotton industry led to the passing in 1774 of a fresh Act (14 Geo. III, c. 72), which permitted the use as apparel, furniture, or otherwise, of printed or dyed stuffs manufactured in Great Britain wholly of cotton. The Act of 1720 was thus virtually repealed, though it lingered on the statute-book until 1867. The subsequent history of the industry is sufficiently familiar.

The protective measures detailed above have sometimes been represented as a deliberate blow, inflicted upon defenceless Indian interests in deference to the selfish clamours of English trade rivals. But it must be remembered that, in the first place, India was then entirely independent of Great Britain, and had no more claim to special consideration in such matters than France or Germany. Secondly, it was generally accepted that each country was justified in fostering its own manufactures and in protecting them against competition from abroad. The manufacture and sale of woollen goods had for ages been regarded as the backbone of English trade, while the sheep-rearing (and consequently the land-owning) interests

were likewise involved in its prosperity; hence for generations Parliament had been legislating on its behalf, with the general approval of the nation. In his *Plan of the English Commerce* (1728) Defoe put clearly what was evidently the accepted view on the subject. "'Tis the interest of every nation to encourage their own trade, to encourage those manufactures that will employ their own subjects, consume their own growth of provisions, as well as materials of commerce, and such as will keep their money or species at home. 'Tis from this just principle that the French prohibit the English woollen manufacture, and the English again prohibit, or impose a tax equal to a prohibition, on the French silks, paper, linen, and several other of their manufactures. 'Tis from the same just reason in trade that we prohibit the wearing of East India wrought silks, printed calicoes, etc.; that we prohibit the importation of French brandy, Brazil sugars, and Spanish tobacco." As here hinted, this principle was accepted as freely in France as in England; and we may add that it had the same consequences in both countries as regards Indian manufactured goods. In 1686 the importation into France from India of printed cottons and manufactured silks was prohibited; and although in the following year, owing to the protests of the French East India Company, the prohibition was partially relaxed as regards silks, yet in 1702 even this concession was withdrawn, and the trade in both branches was entirely destroyed.

VI

THE STAFF IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

THE relations between the Company and the members of its household at this period form an interesting subject of inquiry—the more so as in the system then in vogue may be discerned the rudiments of many practices which became part of the established order of things in Leadenhall Street and were ultimately passed on to the present India Office.

When what was to prove the permanent Joint Stock was started under Cromwell's charter of 1657, the directorate, with proper commercial caution, commenced their operations with a very modest staff. At a meeting held on February 10, 1658, the following establishment was agreed upon :

" Mr. Michaell Dunkin, to keep the Cash bookes, and doe such businesse in the Tresury as hee hath formerly done, at the salary of £150 per annum ; Mr. Richard Harris, his Assistant, at £80 ; Mr. Samuell Sambrooke, to write letters, and keep the Calico Warehouse, at £100 ; John Herbert, to assist him, at £30 ; Mr. James Acton, Solicitor and Attourney, at £20 ; John Stanyan, Secretary and Keeper of the Exchaunge Warehouse, at £100 ; Percivall Aungier,[1] to pay the Mariners, and doe such businesse as

[1] His sister married Thomas Pepys, cousin of the diarist. The latter records that on November 17, 1663, he called on his " cousin Angier " at the India House and took him out to dinner.

hee shalbe appointed, at £30; John Spiller, to be Beadle and Porter at £30; Bartholomew Holoway, to assist him at £30; Mr. Jeremie Sambrooke,[1] Generall Accomptant, to keep the Companyes bookes in such way and method as shalbe thought fitt by Mr. Governour, Mr. Deputie, &c. &c." Sambrooke's salary was not settled until the following September, when the Court resolved to allow him £200 a year, and at the same time, "in regard it was not thought reasonable hee should doe every bodies businesse for nothing," authorized him to levy a fee on every transfer of stock from one adventurer to another. This concession, however, was withdrawn almost immediately, as being dishonourable to the Company, and Sambrooke was forbidden to take any fees in future. As compensation, an addition of £20 a year was made to his salary. Before long, however, the practice of levying transfer fees was evidently resumed.

For a time this staff, with a few additions, was adequate to the demands of the work. But the extraordinary flood of prosperity which set in soon after the Restoration[2] and

[1] Sambrooke had been in the service of the Company since 1608, and he continued to hold the post of Accountant-General until his death in 1669. A reference in the *Court Minutes* to the fact that his estate was forfeited to the King remained a mystery until the discovery of the following entry in the *Obituary of Richard Smyth* (Camden Society, 1849): "1669, July 1. Mr. Anth. [*sic*] Sambrook, in Bell Alley in Coleman Street, of the East India Company, hanged himself." Suicide, of course, entailed the confiscation by the Crown of the goods and chattels of the deceased, whose body was doubtless buried at four cross-roads with a stake driven through it.

[2] According to a parliamentary return cited in Chandler's *History and Proceedings of the House of Commons* (vol. iii. p. 86), the dividends from 1657 to 1691 amounted to no less than 840½ per cent on the original paid-up stock. This includes the record dividend of January, 1682, when, upon the arrival of six ships with cargoes valued at half a million sterling, a division was ordered at the rate of 150 per cent, of which a third was to be distributed in cash and the remainder applied to paying-up the uncalled moiety of each member's share.

continued—with some check during the Dutch wars of 1665–67 and 1672–74—until the Revolution brought about a large increase in the establishment. In April, 1678, the latter consisted of: One Cashier-General, at £300; one Assistant Cashier-General (who was also Housekeeper), at £120, and three assistants. Two Auditors (for the Indian Accounts), at £100 each, with an assistant apiece. Four Warehouse-Keepers, at salaries ranging from £80 to £160; one of them having an additional £10 for "setting up the candle" at sales. Each of these had an assistant. One Secretary, at £240, with two assistants. One Accountant-General, at £200, with two assistants and four clerks. One Husband, at £200, with an assistant. One Paymaster of the Mariners, at £30. One Solicitor, at £20 (and fees). One Surveyor, at £80. Two Surveyors of Private Trade, at £20 each. One Doorkeeper, at £40.

And in May, 1709, when the matter was gone into afresh in consequence of the amalgamation of the Old and the New Companies, the following establishment (omitting some minor appointments) was agreed upon:

Treasury.—One Cashier, at £200 and £100 gratuity. One Assistant, at £100. Four clerks, at from £30 to £80.

Accomptant's Office (including *Transfer Office*).—One Accountant-General, at £250. One second, at £140. Fourteen clerks, at from £20 to £125.

Secretary's Office.—One Secretary, at £240. One Assistant, at £100 (with an allowance of £20 for house rent). Four clerks, at from £20 to £60.

A Chief Clerk to the Committee of Private Trade, at £120. Two clerks, at £50 and £80.

Warehousekeepers.—Five, at from £80 to £100. Five assistants, at £50 and £60.

A Husband and Keeper of Waterside Warehouses, at £100. An assistant, at £50.

A Paymaster of Mariners, at £50.

A Clerk to the Committee of Shipping, at £50.

A Housekeeper, at £30.

Two Ushers, at £40.

A Messenger, at £40.

The salaries allotted to the officers were probably liberal, judged by the standard of the times; and it must be borne in mind that many of them were permitted to levy fees in addition, or had other means of adding to their incomes. In the Secretary's office the fees charged for registering transfers of shares were distributed in fixed proportions—the rule laid down in 1709 being that half should go to the Secretary, a quarter to the Assistant, and the rest should be divided equally among the clerks. Similar charges, though on a more extensive scale, were in vogue in the Accountant-General's and Cashier-General's departments, for those were days when no one expected to get anything for nothing. The Keepers of the Warehouses had many opportunities of making money, both by honest and dishonest courses. The sale and delivery of goods were almost entirely managed by them, and their means of favouring or obstructing purchasers were no doubt utilized from time to time to further their own interests. Occasionally complaints were made to the Directors, and the offending officer was brought to book; but the tendency of the age favoured laxity in this respect, and no doubt most merchants who had large dealings with the Company

found it expedient to smooth the course of business by indirect methods.

The laxity that prevailed in the years immediately following the Restoration is well shown by the case of the Secretary, John Stanyan. On December 12, 1666, it was reported to the Committees that this servant of theirs had spoken disrespectfully of several members of their body. An inquiry was ordered, and a week later Stanyan was dismissed, an examination of his papers having shown that he had for some time traded in goods prohibited by the Company, that he had abetted several of the Company's factors in similar practices, and that in his correspondence with the latter he had freely criticized his employers' actions. Two days later Robert Blackborne was sworn as Secretary at £100 per annum. The occasion was taken to clip the wings of the Company's officers in various ways. Henceforth they were not to be permitted to bid at any of the sales of goods, nor to trade in any manner whatsoever. They were forbidden to hold correspondence with anyone in India, though letters might be sent to relatives there after being shown to the Governor or the Deputy. Should any servant receive goods from the East he was at once to declare the same to the Governor or the Deputy and obtain permission before disposing of them. Finally, the officers were no longer to employ their private clerks in the business of the Company; in future the latter would provide all the clerical assistance necessary and thus have its staff entirely under its control.

As regards salary, the rank and file would naturally come off worse than the heads of departments, but even they appear to have been sufficiently well paid to make a situation at the East India House a thing to be sought for. As a rule a clerk had to serve four or five years—at least

in the Accountant-General's Department—without salary, this period counting as a species of apprenticeship, during which the new-comer was learning his duties and making his services worth paying for. Later it became usual to give him a gratuity for his labour during these years, but not to appoint him to the regular staff until his period of probation was at an end. In November, 1686, an instance occurs of a youth being formally bound apprentice to the Company, to serve five years in the Accountant-General's department, his father finding him diet, lodging, apparel, and all other necessaries during that term. Earlier still (January, 1669) the Court had had to interfere to prevent the Accountant-General and the Auditor from taking apprentices on their own account, whom they employed on the Company's books, doubtless with a view to their establishing a claim to subsequent employment. This was a survival of the old system under which the Company gave an inclusive salary to an officer, leaving him to find such clerical assistance as he might require.

We may here note that there was little or nothing of the present-day uniformity of pay and hours. The East India House establishment was more like a bundle of offices located in one building than a number of branches of the same office. Each head of a department was king in his own domain (subject, of course, to the general control of the Directors) ; and rules or salaries or methods of work which obtained in the Secretary's office did not necessarily obtain in that of the Accountant-General. Nor were the duties assigned to the several officers always those which we should now associate with the posts they held. The Accountant-General had nothing to do with the payment of money ; this was the particular function of the Cashier-General, and the former officer was concerned with book-

keeping alone. The Auditor exercised no control over the home payments, but busied himself with checking the accounts received from India. The Secretary managed all business connected with the transfer and registration of shares; attended and recorded the meetings of the Court; and wrote such letters as they directed to be sent to persons at home or abroad. It was not until May, 1676, that the drafting of letters for India, which had hitherto been done by Mr. Samuel Sambrooke, the Keeper of the Calico Warehouse, was added to the Secretary's duties. Even then a considerable part of this work appears to have been undertaken by members of the directorate, including the Governor himself. Nor can we be sorry that this was so, for it resulted in a pungency of style and a freedom of expression which render the dispatches of the time most entertaining reading. For example, we find the Court writing as follows to Madras in January, 1679: "That [letter] of the 26th of January [1677] subscribed by the quondam Agent and Councell, although it be voluminous in words and haughty, vaine, and unmanerly expressions, such as it becomes not any of you to subscribe nor us to receive, yet is so empty of substantiall matter relating to our business that wee finde very few particulars in it that need or deserve our answer, other than such as are inoffensively and more pertinently mentioned in the letter and address of the present Agent, where, as we meet with them, you shall have a full answer thereunto. But before we get off this, we must note to you that it is very strange and monstrous that severally in your particular letters to us as private persons you should write with so much deference and obsequiousness as wee neither desire nor expect, and yet to the Court in generall should address yourself in such an affronting and unmerchantable stile as becomes

not any man of breeding to write to his equall. Wee shall conclude this paragraph with telling you that no man living in our service, whatever he be, shall write to us such kinde of language again with impunity." And later, in September, 1687, they addressed to the same presidency the following stinging reproof: "You are very ready and frequent in reprehending our conduct, and if you could advise us to mend it, we should be willing to hear you or any other well-minded person, it being our own interest to manage all things for the Company's most advantage, as well as for the honour and interest of our sovereign and our native country. But your exceptions to our conduct are so very impertinent and cilly that we wonder the lower end of your Council are not ashamed to sett their hands to such slight arguments."

Even when the drafting of dispatches had fallen entirely into the hands of the staff, some attempt was made to imitate these Olympian thunders, and to the last the tradition lingered that the East India House should "take a high tone" in writing to the governments in India.

Probably the most lucrative post in the building, if all were known, was that of Cashier-General, for he had always in his hands a considerable sum of money, concerning the employment of which, provided it were forthcoming when wanted, no inquiry seems to have been made. Occasionally, however, there was trouble. Thus, in March, 1668, when money was needed in a hurry to pay customs due to the Treasury, the Cashier-General was obliged to confess that he was unable to produce the required sum; and a committee of investigation reported that although the last balance of cash stood in the books at £52,677, 3s. 10d., they found that £10,000 had been lent to Messrs. Atwell &

Company,[1] £6500 to Mr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Cooke, and over £3000 to Sir Josia Child, besides an actual deficiency of £3000 unaccounted for. They added that such sums had been lent on other occasions, although the Company had itself been at the same time borrowing money at interest. One would have expected that the dismissal of the responsible officer would have followed as a matter of course; but nothing of the kind seems to have occurred. Perhaps the fact that such influential members of the Court were among the borrowers, while others either knew or ought to have known what was going on, led to the matter being hushed up.

It may have been as a consequence of this incident that in 1670–71 we find the Company depositing considerable sums in the hands of Alderman Backwell, the well-known banker of Lombard Street. Particulars of these payments are given by Sir George Birdwood in his *Report on the Old Records of the India Office* (second reprint, 1891, p. 25), on the authority of Mr. F. G. Hilton Price, who copied them from Backwell's ledgers, now preserved at Child's Bank. The money appears, however, to have been intended for the provision of gold and silver bullion for export, and it is doubtful whether the analogy with a modern banking account holds good. Backwell, it is well known, was ruined in 1672 by the King closing the Exchequer and seizing all the deposits; but there is no

[1] Bankers and Goldsmiths in Exchange Alley, Lombard Street. The business collapsed at the time of the South Sea panic. Mr. Hilton Price (*London Bankers*, p. 3) quotes the following lines, addressed by Gay to Snow, the goldsmith, in 1720:

> "When credit sank and commerce gasping lay,
> Thou stoodst, nor sent one bill unpaid away;
> When not a guinea chinked on Martin's boards,
> And Atwell's self was drained of all his hoards."

evidence that the East India Company suffered any loss in consequence.

The foundation of the Bank of England in 1694 gave the Company an opportunity of improving its haphazard methods, but it was too conservative to avail itself of the chance. The rival English East India Company was wiser, and from its inception in 1698 banked with the new institution. When in 1709 the two Companies were amalgamated, a fresh account was opened at the Bank in the name of the United Company. As this ran on till the dissolution, the East India Company's account must at the close have been one of the oldest on the books of the Bank.

The system of annual increments to the clerks' salaries was unknown, and the grant of a pension was exceptional, made only as an act of charity. In May, 1687, two old members of the establishment were allowed £50 per annum, "giving attendance when they feel disposed thereunto." A watchman, with thirty years' service to his credit, petitioned for assistance in 1714, being "very poor and infirm," with the result that his salary of 7s. a week was continued to him for the rest of his life. In the following year the Surveyor of Shipping, "disabled by age and sickness," was allowed £15 per annum, to be deducted from the salary of his successor. Ten years later the Keeper of the Pepper Warehouse was accorded more liberal treatment, for he received a pension of £60, which was taken, not from another man's earnings, but from the Poplar Fund. A similar arrangement was made in 1733, when a clerk in the Accountant-General's office, incapacitated by ill-health, was allowed a Poplar pension of £30 per annum; and in the next year two other officers, who were "grown old and superannuated," were granted £40 and £80 respectively from the same source.

The custom of electing the staff each year—a practice still maintained by the City Corporation and the City Companies—was dropped *sub silentio* after 1717. For years it had become a mere matter of course, and in the press of business the annual election was often postponed and occasionally omitted altogether.

The hours of attendance of the staff we should now regard as unduly long, though they merely conformed to the usual practice of the City. In October, 1672, the Treasury was ordered to be shut on Saturdays at four in the winter and at six in the summer, " for the conveniency of ballanceing the cash once a week." A year later directions were given that the Accountant's clerks were to attend from seven in summer and eight in winter, and not to leave their work until permitted to do so by the Accountant-General himself. Their hours were more exactly defined by an order of Court dated the 4th November, 1674, which laid down that they must be at the office between eight and twelve and two and seven from Michaelmas to Lady Day. During the rest of the year they were to come at seven in the morning and remain (doubtless with the usual two hours' interval for dinner) till eight at night, though even then they were not to depart without permission. In May, 1703, eight o'clock was made the regular hour of commencing business, and in July, 1709, the hours for the Accountant's office were fixed at eight till one and three till six during the summer, and nine till one and three till six in the winter. Every officer was directed to sign on arrival; and in February, 1711, this rule was extended to signing at departure, and the attendance book was ordered to be brought into Court at every meeting. Evidently this practice soon fell into abeyance, for in July, 1719, five clerks in the Accountant's office

were suspended for being absent without leave; and six months later, on renewed complaints of irregular attendance, the order for signing on and off daily was repeated, and the heads of offices were directed to enter in a special book from time to time whether they had any representations to make regarding the conduct of their subordinates. The supervision of the attendance in the outlying departments must have been very lax, for in May, 1727, the attention of the Court was drawn to the fact that John Smith, an Elder Porter at the Drug Warehouse, had been absent without leave since January, 1726. An inquiry was ordered, which resulted in the offender being dismissed a week later.

Holiday leave, for anything beyond a day or two, had not then been dreamt of. Occasionally a clerk was permitted, on his humble petition, to go to The Bath or some other watering-place for the benefit of his health, or to take a journey into the country if his private affairs required him so to do; but such a concession was exceptional and needed the formal sanction of the Court. On the other hand, there were a larger number of public holidays than at present; and once a year a whole day was given to the staff "to keep their annual feast," probably by an excursion to Epping Forest or some other favoured spot. This holiday is first alluded to in the *Minutes* of 1716, when the office was ordered to be closed on May 28 for the purpose; but the wording shows that the feast had been customary, though possibly a whole day's leave had not been granted previously. In 1729 the date was changed to May 29 (owing to the 28th falling on a Sunday), and thenceforward that became the chosen day. After 1749 there is no mention of the matter in the *Court Minutes*; but this is probably due to the holiday having become a matter of

course. We catch another glimpse of the festival thirty-three years later, for a correspondent of *Notes and Queries* (September 15, 1900) has unearthed a notice that the East India Company's officers held their annual feast at the "Long Room" (? the Flask Tavern Long Room), Hampstead, on August 24, 1782. Evidently in some intervening year the month of the outing had been changed; and this held good down to Charles Lamb's time. That genial *bon-vivant* makes several references in his letters to the subject, which must have appealed to him for more than one reason. On August 13, 1814, he wrote exultingly to Coleridge: "I am going to eat turbot, turtle, venison, marrow pudding—cold punch, claret, Madeira—at our annual feast, at half-past four this day"; and a year later his sister tells Miss Hutchinson: "Last Saturday was the grand feast day of the India House clerks. I think you must have heard Charles talk of his yearly turtle feast." She goes on to note that its celebration entailed a holiday, and that this year the brother and sister had used it for a week-end jaunt to Cambridge. The annual dinner was abolished by the Court of Directors on April 8, 1816, an annual sum of £600 being contributed instead to the newly founded fund for the widows and children of deceased members of the home establishment.

The Court of Committees was not satisfied with looking after the behaviour of the clerks during office hours. In the *Minutes* for January 17, 1679, we read: "This Court being informed that some of the clerks belonging to this House have been observed to be present at stageplaies, danceing schools, etc., and to frequent tavernes and other publick houses, did thinke fitt to call them downe to attend the Court, where they were examined concerning the same and received admonition from the Governor that in case

any of them shall be found to goe to playhouses, dancing schooles or other places of game or unlawfull recreation, or to mispend their time in frequenting tavernes or other publick houses, they should in such case be dismissed from their present employments." And on September 8, 1697, there is an entry to the effect that: "The Court being informed that Mr. John Manwaring, one of the clerks, hath for severall months past been observed to live in a port much beyond his quality, by keeping a coach and servants wearing his livery, he was called down; and being examined thereabouts, and particularly what allowance he had from his father to support that equipage; and he affirming that the coach and livery was not his own nor maintained at his charge, though he had the command thereof, and declining to give any account whose they were or whether he was marryed, it is ordered that the Governor be desired further to examine him touching the said particulars, and if he does not give satisfaction therein, that he be suspended from his employment." Evidently the delinquent—whose salary was only £30 a year—remained contumacious, for a week later the Governor reported his suspension, and at the end of the month he was dismissed altogether.

Even the members of the Court required to be called to order occasionally. In October, 1675, we find it laid down that "the Committees for the Treasury" are to sit at the end of the table on Court days ("which is the place appointed for them who have the management of that affair"), and a fine of twelvepence to the poor-box is to be levied on any of them found sitting in another part of the room. Then, too, the question of late attendance was always giving trouble. The annual payment to each Committee was regulated by the number of meetings he

attended. There was consequently no difficulty in getting a fair muster at each court; but several busy members appear to have minimized the amount of time spent in this way by coming late and going early. The Court assembled at nine in the morning, and in June, 1673, it was ordered that any member who did not arrive "before the clock hath struck eleven," or left without permission when there were but fourteen in court, should lose his attendance for the day. In May, 1691, it was resolved to allow first an hour's grace and then to turn up an hour-glass; any member appearing after the succeeding half-hour was to pay half a crown to the poor-box, while those absent when the sand had run out were to lose their fees. Possibly a difficulty was found in extracting half-crowns from dilatory members, for in April, 1710, a new plan was devised. Each director was required at intervals to deposit forty shillings, and if he came "within an hour after the time of summons and before the clock has done striking," half a crown was returned to him; if not, the money was impounded.

The labours of the Committees were evidently alleviated by the provision of light refreshments at the cost of the Company, for on November 11, 1674, we find an order that "Mr. Humphrey Edwin [the Cashier-General] doe henceforth provide such quantity of thea and sugar as shall be necessary for the use of the Committees, and to deliver out the same to Mrs. Harris [the Housekeeper] by one pound at a time, and sugar proportionable." This, however, was but a continuation of an existing practice, for eight years before the same Mrs. Harris had been given 40s. as compensation for the loss of four silver spoons "used about the necessary occasions of this House."

Two mute reminders of these teacup times now stand

close together in a glass case in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington. One is a silver teapot—the earliest English specimen known—about thirteen inches high. Though of a shape usually associated with the brewing of coffee,[1] there can be no doubt as to its real purpose, for it bears, in addition to the Company's arms, the following inscription : " This silver tea Pott was presented to the Com^{tte} of the East India Cumpany by the Right Hono^{e} George Lord Berkeley of Berkeley Castle [2] A member of that Honourable & worthy Society and A true hearty Lover of them 1670." The other is a silver coffee-pot (or so it is supposed) of similar shape but smaller size, with the London hall-mark of 1681–82. It is inscribed : " The Guift of Richard Sterne, Eq^{e}, to the Honorable East-India Comp^{a}," and below are the arms of the donor. Sterne was elected a Committee in 1686 and again in 1689 ; but no record of the presentation has been found in the Company's minutes. Both vessels are figured and described in C. J. Jackson's *History of English Plate* (vol. ii. pp. 943–5).

In addition to these slight refreshments, the Committees, as we find from the Petty Cash books, regaled themselves on occasions with substantial meals. Then, too, there were the official dinners, such as that recorded in July, 1717, when President Harrison, who had just returned from Madras, was invited " to dine with this Court on

[1] In the *Lives of the Norths* (ed. Jessop, vol. iii. p. 318) we are told that, in the early days of its use, tea was boiled in a coffee-pot and served in cups not bigger than large thimbles. On her marriage (1696), Roger North's wife received a present of some tea ; and afterwards it was her practice to regale her Norfolk neighbours with " that curious herb."

[2] George, Baron Berkeley (created Earl of Berkeley in 1679), joined the Court of Committees in July, 1660, and was re-elected each year until 1696. He had a family interest in the East India trade, for his wife was a daughter of John Massingberd, the former Treasurer of the Company. He proved a very useful link between the Company and the Court.

Wednesday next at Brawnd's." From time to time mention is made of two brace of deer annually given to the Company for feasting purposes from the royal preserves; and in June, 1727, there is a petulant entry that the Court "order'd that Mr. Lloyd do return to Mr. Hungerford [Standing Counsel] the warrants for two brace of bucks lately sent by him, for that the venison is not worth the sending for, being in such places where it is not good; and that he had directions the last year not to concern himself about the said warrants in future." This seems to have resulted in an improved supply, for the following year three directors were deputed to "take care of the execution of the warrants for His Majesty's venison, and that this day sen'night be appointed to dine thereon."

The system of presenting spices every Christmas to the directors and chief officials (and also to those of the officers at the Custom House "*who have deserved it*") was started at the beginning of the Company's trade, when such commodities were costly luxuries; but it lasted down to January, 1727, when orders were issued that this gift should be restricted, as regards the officers of the House, to a list of thirty-five persons, and should cease as their places became vacant.

VII

SOME PETTY CASH BOOKS

IN the *Home Miscellaneous* series of the India Office Records there is one volume of very special interest for the student of unconsidered trifles relating to the early history of the East India Company. It contains four petty cash books, of which the first three cover the period 1657–74 and the fourth runs from 1705 to 1711. We have already drawn upon one of these for some entries relating to the Great Fire; let us now see what the others contain that is of use for our purposes.

The first book contains petty cash disbursements by John Stanyan, who was Secretary to the Company from 1654 to 1666. It begins in the summer of 1657, when the starting of the "New General Stock" was under consideration; and many of the early entries relate to visits to Whitehall about the proposed charter or the Company's claims against the Dutch. Thus, besides numerous charges for boat-hire and coach-hire, we find that on June 18 the Secretary "disbursed in goeing to Whitehall about the charter, 6s. 6d."; that on July 24 and August 13 the visits of certain Committees to Westminster for the same purpose entailed an expenditure of £2, 4s., besides £1, 13s. for their dinners "at the James"; and that on November 6 the sum of 10s. was "given to the severall doorekeepers at Whitehall." On the 26th of the same month a general

assembly of the new adventurers was held at Leathersellers Hall, followed by another on December 4, apparently at the hall of the Merchant Taylors. The former resulted in the Secretary having soon after to disburse 18s. "to the joyner for mending the formes at Leathersellers Hall." It appears, too, that the meetings were so prolonged that the same official was unable to return to his house for his midday meal, for he enters 15s. as "paid in ditto places for dinners for myselfe &c." ; while an entry of 4s. 6d. "for tobacco and pipes, &c., at Leathersellers Hall and Merchant Taylors" shows that some at least of the members were allowed to solace themselves by smoking.[1] For the use of the two halls, three days apiece, the sum of £10 was paid in May, 1658.

The election of Committees, etc., to manage the new stock was originally intended to be held at the end of November or early in December, and in preparation therefor £2, 13s. 6d. was paid to a joiner for a new "ballating box," £1 odd to "the upholster for velvett and worke to the drawers," and £8, 9s. for fourteen gross of "ballating balls," besides 6s. "for two great glasses for the scrutinies." A preparation of a different kind was the arrangement of a preliminary sermon. On November 26 it was "agreed to sett Wednesday morning next apart to seeke God for His blessing and direction on this assembly for their election and proceeding in the well mannaging this weighty affaire ; to which intent the Governour and Committee of the Company were desired to provide an honest, godly devine to preach a sermon at Andrew Undershaft." However,

[1] According to Parliamentary tradition smoking was so prevalent in the House of Commons by the middle of the seventeenth century that an order was made forbidding the practice "in the Gallery or at the Table of the House, sitting as Committees."

differences arose about the oath proposed to be taken by the adventurers, and the election did not actually commence until December 10, 1657.[1] The preliminary sermon was preached on December 2 by Dr. Reynolds, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, to whom on December 22 a sum of £5 was voted in recompense, while on January 4 the Secretary "paid the clerke and sexton of the parrish for their fees and cleaning the church after Dr. Reynolds sermon, 10s." The sermon on this occasion, of which Evelyn gives some account, was printed by the worthy doctor, to whom the Company gave a further £5 to help defray the expense. The parish clerk's "quarteridge," by the way, cost the Company 14s. a year; the tithe came to about 20s. 6d. a quarter; and the annual "assessement for the poore of this parrish and for the Corporation for the Poore" amounted to £6 for the East India House and £3 for their warehouse at Leadenhall. In February, 1659, a sum of £2, 12s. was paid as the yearly assessment of the latter building "to the poore of St. Peters parrish."

At the time of the election the new stock had already been launched. Subscriptions were invited by means of a "Preamble," of which 2000 copies were printed at a cost of £4; one of these copies may still be seen at the Public Record Office. In this connexion we may note an

[1] John Evelyn notes in his diary, under date of November 26: "I went to London to a court of the East India Company upon its new union, in Merchant Taylors' Hall, where was much dissorder by reason of the Anabaptists, who would have the adventurers oblig'd onely by an engagement, without swearing, that they still might pursue their private trade; but it was carried against them. Wednesday was fix'd on for a General Court for election of officers, after a sermon and prayer for good success. The stock resolv'd on was £800,000." He subscribed for £500 (£250 paid), and in 1682 sold his share to the Royal Society for £750.

It will be seen that Evelyn is wrong as to the place of meeting. The official record says plainly that the Court was "holden . . . at Leather-Sellers Hall," as already stated.

entry on March 26, 1658, of £1, 2s. "for vellam, ruleing and binding the coppy of the Charter," which had just been granted by His Highness the Lord Protector. As mentioned already, this charter has totally disappeared.

Under the same date occurs a charge of £4 "for two mastiffe doggs and meat for them." These can hardly have been needed for the protection of the East India House; and the probability is that they were intended to be sent in the *Mayflower* as presents to the Queen of Achin.

The presentation of a petition to the Protector about the Dutch in August, 1658, entailed an outlay of £11, 0s. 6d., of which £3, 13s. 6d. was for "three coaches, gratuitys and other expences to Hampton Court," and the rest for "the Committees dinner at Kingstone." On the 20th of the same month there is an entry of £1, 11s. "for a dinner for the Committees heere." Two months earlier, £1, 8s. was refunded to "Sherriff Bateman, which he with some other of the Committees expended to enterteyne Capt. Dutton about Polaroone." Evidently, however, there were occasions when the cost of the feast did not come out of the funds of the Company, for in the Minutes of April 2, 1658, we find arrangements made "to provide a dinner against Monday next in this House for the whole Committee *at their owne charge*, at which tyme it was resolved to take a solemne leave of the President," *i.e.* Nathaniel Wyche, who was about to depart for Surat.

As regards office expenses we note payments of £14, 5s. and £10, 10s. respectively for two successive years' supply of paper, books, quills, ink, etc.; of £2 for "a letter presse of iron"; of 6s. "for a table for the office"; 19s. "for a new carpett for the round table"; 5s. "for makeing cleane the standishes and candlesticks"; and of a like sum "given the woman for washing the parlour." "Watching in this

House" cost per quarter from £9, 10s. 6d. to £16, 4s. 9d.; for "a quarters watching and lookeing to Leadenhall" 18s. 2d. was charged; and "a quarters watch in this Warde" came to the same amount. The supply of river water is set down as costing 10s. the three months; the scavenger was paid at the rate of 26s. per annum; and "the gardner his quartridge" was 8s. Special work "in the Governors roome" cost 26s. to the upholsterer and 6s. 8d. to the carpenter; while on February 9, 1658, there is an entry of 8s. "for a chaire, cushine, and pott for the Governor."

"An expresse to the Downes" entailed an expenditure of £2, 6s. Postage seems to have varied considerably. One letter from Holland is charged at 2s., while in the following month two from the same country cost together 1s. Two letters from Leghorn at different dates are set down for 1s. apiece. The postage on a warrant returned from Plymouth in November, 1657, was 4s., but in the following February letters from Plymouth and Oxford cost only 6d. each.

The second book begins (where the first one ends) in the middle of 1659, and runs on till May 29, 1675. From internal evidence it is concluded that this contains the expenses of Samuel Sambrooke, the Keeper of the Calico Warehouse. There are many entries relating to the payment of porters (10s. per week); the purchase of pails, brooms, nails, "a mowse trap," and other necessaries;[1] coach-hire and boat-hire (a shilling to and from Westminster, and double that amount for a journey to Lambeth and back), and so on. In April, 1662, Sambrooke was sent to carry letters, invoices, etc., to the outgoing ships, then

[1] The allowance for keeping the East India House clean in 1661 was £4 per annum (*Court Minutes*, December 23).

lying in the Downs, and his journey cost the Company £5, 6s. 6d. He was evidently worldly wise, for he charges (October, 1665) 3s. "for two bottells wine, when the Waiters came to view damaged goods"; but the purpose of spending 1s. 6d. "for a bottle of sack after the Court of Sales" (March, 1666) is not quite so apparent. Lastly we may note the purchase on October 5, 1667, of eighteen proclamations of peace between England on the one hand and France, Holland, and Denmark on the other. These proclamations had been issued on the preceding September 24 and cost twopence apiece. No doubt they were intended to be sent out for the information of the Company's servants in the East.

Arms of the Old Company.

The third book contains only payments to watchmen at Leadenhall, from November, 1666, to April, 1669, and is of no special interest for our purpose. The fourth, however, is of a very different nature. It contains the petty cash disbursements of John Gilbert, the Secretary of the New ("English") East India Company,[1]

[1] John Gardner was the first Secretary, with Gilbert as his clerk; but on October 12, 1705, Gardner was dismissed (without any reason being recorded) and his papers were ordered to be handed over to Gilbert. On the union of the two Companies, the latter became Assistant Secretary at £100 a year, with an extra £20 for house rent (*Court Minutes*, May 25, 1709). In July, 1713, he was made Warehousekeeper for Private Trade goods, a post which he held until his death on May 25, 1732. His son, also named John, entered the Church and rose to be Archbishop of York (1757–61).

and it extends from October 13, 1705, to April 25, 1711. This it is worth while to examine in some detail.

It is hardly necessary to remind the reader of the long struggle that took place in the closing years of the seventeenth century between the existing East India Company and a body of outside merchants who were determined to force their way into a trade which experience had shown to be so lucrative. As every one knows, the assailants were successful, mainly because they agreed to lend the Government a sum of two millions (at 8 per cent interest) in return for the exclusive concession of the commerce between England and the East. The latter operation necessitated an Act of Parliament and two royal charters. The Act, which received the royal assent on July 5, 1698, unfolded a rather complex plan, intended to sweep into the financial net both those who wished to organize the commerce on a joint stock basis (following the lines of the Old Company) and also those who were clamouring for a looser form of association which would permit individual trading. It was therefore arranged that all the subscribers to the new loan should be forthwith enrolled by royal charter in a corporation to be called "the General Society intituled to the advantages given" by the Act. Each member of this body was to decide whether he would trade to the

Arms of the New (and United) Company.

East on his own account (which he might do to the extent annually of his contribution to the loan), or whether he would forgo this privilege and join with other members in a joint stock company, which was likewise to be incorporated (if desired) by a charter from the Crown. In accordance with this scheme Letters Patent were issued on September 3, 1698, formally constituting the "General Society"; and two days later—the vast majority of the subscribers having elected to unite in a joint stock—all but the dissidents were again incorporated as the "English Company Trading to the East Indies." The new association at once commenced operations; but it encountered an unexpected rivalry on the part of the Old Company. That body was supposed to have received its quietus; its inheritance had been given to another, and it had received formal intimation that it would be dissolved after the requisite three years had elapsed. However, the Committees were equal to the occasion. They adroitly subscribed, through their Cashier, the sum of £315,000 to the loan, and thereby secured the right to trade annually to that extent without interference; and, as in April, 1700, they succeeded in procuring an Act of Parliament continuing their shareholders as a corporation under its old name, the Old Company was in quite as good a position as the New, both legally and financially, while it had the advantage in point of experience and established position. The result was a bitter struggle between the servants of the two bodies, and most of the settlements in India were distracted by their squabbles and intrigues. The impolicy of this rivalry had, however, been recognized at an early date, and in 1702 an agreement was come to for merging the two bodies, or, to speak more strictly, for absorbing the original

Company in the one lately founded, which was to become "The United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies." A period of seven years was allowed for each body to wind up its separate stock, and in the meantime twenty-four Managers were to be appointed yearly (twelve by each Company) to supervise the trade.[1] The details of the final settlement were worked out in 1708 (under a fresh Act of Parliament) by the arbitration of the Earl of Godolphin, and the first Court of Directors of the United Company was held on March 23, 1709.

It was at Mercers' Hall that the books were laid open for the two million loan; and, when with the grant of its charter the New Company came into legal existence, the first meetings of the Directors were held in the same place. This was evidently a mere temporary arrangement, and one of their earliest decisions was to look out for a more permanent abode. Several houses were proposed, but the Committee entrusted with the choice fixed upon Skinners' Hall, which was rented from Christmas, 1698, for one and three-quarter years certain, at £250 per annum, the tenants paying all taxes. The Skinners' Company bargained to reserve a portion of the building, and to be allowed the use of the Hall, great parlour, and kitchen twice a year for their Lord Mayor's Day and Election Day

[1] I am indebted to Mr. A. H. Thomas, the custodian of the Guildhall records, for a curious fact not generally known, namely, that in 1702 the City Corporation addressed a petition to the Queen, praying that any person chosen for the office of Governor, Deputy-Governor, Director, or Committee-man of the East India Company, should be required to take up the freedom of the City. The petition was referred to the Attorney-General, whose report, presumably unfavourable, was communicated to the Corporation; and in the end the proposal was dropped. In later years it was the boast of the East India Company that its stock was open to every one, without distinction of nationality, religion, or sex.

Dinners.[1] The first meeting held there was on November 15, 1698. About a year later (December 13, 1699) a fresh agreement was signed, by which the East India Company leased the Hall and its appurtenances, two other messuages, and the stable and coach-house adjoining the Hall, for eleven years from Michaelmas, 1700, with the proviso that after four years the premises might be surrendered on giving twelve months' notice (*Minutes*, September 20, 1706). The rent remained as before, £250 per annum. The requisite notice was given in September, 1706; but in July, 1707, an arrangement was made to extend the Company's tenancy until Michaelmas, 1708; and, as a matter of fact, the staff did not quit Skinners' Hall for nearly seven months after the latter date.

While upon this subject we may note that the New Company rented the halls of two other City guilds. In August, 1704, a note occurs in the *Court Minutes* that

[1] See Wadmore's *Account of the Worshipful Company of Skinners* (1902), pp. 68, 69. As a matter of fact—at all events in the later years—the Skinners were generally persuaded to hold their dinners elsewhere, the East India Company defraying the resulting expenses (*Court Minutes*, *passim*).

According to Macaulay, the Skinners had previously lent their Hall to "the Dowgate Company," as he calls the association which developed into the New Company. It is dangerous to question his authority, for his knowledge of the period was extraordinarily minute; but the authority he cites (Seymour's *Survey of London*) manifestly refers to the later tenancy after the establishment of the Company, and Mr. Wadmore does not appear to have found any trace in the Skinners' records of a previous occupation. On the other hand, we find that in November, 1700, the New Company presented to the Skinners four large silver candlesticks weighing over a hundred ounces (Wadmore, *op. cit.*, p. 69), and it is of course possible that this gift was meant as an acknowledgment for services rendered prior to its formation. The records of the New Company, which would probably have explained the matter, are unfortunately missing for this period.

These candlesticks are still in the possession of the Skinners' Company, and were exhibited by them at the Empire of India Exhibition in 1905. They are illustrated and described in an article that appeared in the *Connoisseur* for May, 1903. The Company has also a mahogany court table said to have been presented by the East India Company.

SKINNERS' HALL

the Wardens of the Leathersellers Hall expected six months' notice before they would permit the surrender of that building; whereupon the Committee concerned was asked to make the best terms possible. Apparently the Hall was used as a warehouse, and on its abandonment Merchant Taylors' Hall was hired instead, at a rental of £200 per annum. We find the New Company in occupation in November, 1705, and the last payment for rent (with an additional £30 for repairs) was made at the end of July, 1709.

Now let us turn to Gilbert's petty cash payments, the interest of which is enhanced by the fact that some of the original bills are pasted into the volume. Skinners' Hall, which (we scarcely need say) stands on Dowgate Hill, on the western side of the present Cannon Street Station, had the inconvenient peculiarity of being in two wards (Dowgate and Vintry) and two parishes (St. John the Baptist and St. Michael Paternoster Royal). Hence we find in 1705 and 1706 payments of 21s. 6d. and 10s. 4d. respectively to the ministers of those two parishes for a quarter's tithes; of £3, 18s. to the churchwarden of St. Michael Royal for "one year's tax for the poore"; of £7, 10s. for the yearly poor rate of the other parish; and of £2 to the Lecturer at St. John's as his annual allowance. There is also an entry of £11, 14s. for the poor tax of the parish of St. Martin Outwich (for Merchant Taylors' Hall). The "Queens and Orphans tax for the Hall" (the former for six months, the latter for a year) came to £14; while the Queen's tax "for that part of the Hall which is in Vintry Ward" was £13 per annum. The Window Tax is entered at 16s. for a year, and the Trophy Tax for a similar period was £1, 15s. 10d. The contribution towards the Watch in Broad Street Ward (for Merchant Taylors'

Hall) was 7s. a quarter; while the Company maintained four watchmen of their own at the rate of £40 a year, with an occasional eighteenpence for the purchase of a pound of gunpowder. Of household expenses we may note 5s. paid to the ratcatcher for three months' services; 40s. per annum to the scavenger for the Hall, and 2s. 6d. for a warehouse in Elbow Lane; 12s. 6d. a quarter to the gardener; 4s. to the dustman for "his quarteridge and Christmas box"; 5s. per week to the woman who cleaned the Hall, besides 6d. a basket for the chips with which she lighted the fires in winter, and a like amount in summer for sweet herbs "for the chimney"; 10s. a year to "Mr. Rooker" for attending to the clock; £1 a year for water rent (March, 1706); and £2 for a like period for "the Thames water to the Hall" (December, 1709). In June, 1706, the Company purchased a quantity of coal at 24s. 9d. per chaldron, but the cost of "bringing in," trimming, metage, and lighterage increased the price by 4s. 10d. per chaldron. Four months later eight tons of Scotch coal were bought at 30s. per ton, and on this occasion the extra charges amounted to 26s. 8d. in all. The cost of supplying the office with *The Merchant's Weekly Remembrancer* was a pound a year; while the clerk of the parish received a like amount for his weekly bills. To the beadles of the Mercers' Company, 20s. was paid in March, 1706, for four notices on the Exchange; and "crying the sale" cost 2s. 6d. in December, 1707.

Entries of £4, 2s. for four pounds of green tea (March, 1706), of £1, 14s. for one pound of "Bohe" tea (August, 1709), of 5s. for lemons for punch (November, 1706), of £2, 5s. for a year's supply of beer, and of various amounts for tobacco pipes, make it evident that the Directors were content to copy the Old Company in providing for their

own comforts while attending the meetings. Nor were excuses wanting for more substantial fare. In January, 1706, the visit of Mr. Gilbert to "Pontack's [1] with the Committee to prepare letters" cost £1, 5s. 6d. The election of Directors in the following April occasioned an outlay of £8, 8s. 6d. for "charges in treateing the scrutineers at Pontack's"; and four days later a fresh election (this time for Managers) was accompanied by the expenditure of £6, 18s. 8d "at the Rummer" (in Cheapside). A dinner at the Swan Tavern cost 15s. 6d.—a comparatively trifling sum, but perhaps only the Secretary and another were present. Still smaller was the amount "spent at the taverne about settleing Col. Long's bill for printing," viz. 3s. 6d. In September, 1706, "the reckoning at Pontack's for the twelve Managers" came to £4, 5s.; the cost of entertaining the scrutineers at the two elections in the following spring was £9, 9s. 6d. and £12, 12s. respectively; and the "Committees for inspecting the accompts" had a dinner in January, 1708, for which £2 was paid. Still more significant is a charge in March, 1709, of 25s. for spirits and lemons "to entertaine the China buyers this evening."

There are a few entries of charitable donations, such as 5s. to the sufferers by a fire at Enniskillen (April, 1706) and a like amount to "the collectors of the brief for Lisbon [Lisburn] in Ireland" (June, 1708). In December, 1705, 43s. was given to the widow of a man who had been

[1] Situated in Abchurch Lane. It was regarded as the best tavern and eating-house in the City. Swift (in the *Journal to Stella*) records his dining there on three several occasions, and praises the wine. He also mentions a dinner at the same place which was attended by Lord Somers "and the whole club of Whig Lords." Evelyn, under date of July 13, 1683, gives some account of the proprietor; and later on (November 30, 1693) says, speaking of the members of the Royal Society, "we all dined at Pontacs' as usual."

" drown'd in the Companies service." Christmas-boxes to the postman, watchmen, etc., also figure in the list of expenses; and there are several entries of contributions to bonfires. The occasions of some of these we can trace. Thus the one on May 21, 1706, was kindled in consequence of the victory at Ramillies; those on November 5 and 6 following, towards which 4s. was contributed, were probably the annual celebrations of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot; that on February 6, 1707, is stated to be for the Queen's birthday; and that on July 5, 1708, " on the good news this day," was caused by the arrival of Lord Stairs with the news of " a great and glorious victory " over the French at Oudenarde.

Finally we may group together a number of miscellaneous entries, some of a very quaint character. Apparently Skinners' Hall was liable to find two men at each muster of the City Train Bands. Accordingly we find a charge on July 4, 1706, of " two souldiers on Thankesgiving Day, 2s. 6d. each [for] mustering, and powder 2s.," and a similar entry on April 13, 1708, for " two souldiers on the Trained Bands." The former is not an intelligent anticipation of an American festival, but the Public Thanksgiving for the victory of Ramillies held on June 27; the latter is probably the ordinary annual muster. On October 30, 1706, " a silver tankard, a present to the Dutch commodore," cost £11. This is explained by the following passage from the *Court Minutes* of the 18th of the same month: " Ordered that the peece of plate provided by Mr. Lyell to be presented to the Dutch commodore Beillars for his care of the *Leghorne* frigatt be delivered to Mr. Lyell, with a letter from the Secretary giveing him the thanks of this Company for his said care; and Mr. Lyell is desired to transmitt the same with all convenient speed

to said Comodore Beillars." In August, 1707, Gilbert enters £2, 3s. for "charges in defending myself from holding churchwarden of the parish"—probably on the ground that the Company's business would suffer if he were compelled to accept that office.

Three months later we have a mysterious charge of 2s. 6d. "by what paid the Coroner for the pistoll with which Rawlins killd himselfe." Who Rawlins was, and why he killed himself, are questions we cannot answer. Probably he was one of the watchmen, and had committed suicide with a pistol belonging to the Company; the weapon would thereby be forfeited to the Crown as a deodand, and could only be recovered upon payment of its value. This quaint practice, which was not abolished until the reign of Queen Victoria, dates from a very early period. The root notion was that an animal or thing that caused a man's death ought to be destroyed in expiation; but this was modified into forfeiture, first to pious uses and then to the Crown. A strange distinction was made in English law between an instrument in motion and an instrument at rest. For instance, if a man were killed while climbing up the wheel of a cart at rest, only the wheel became a deodand; while if the accident took place while the cart was moving, the cart and all that it carried were forfeited. If a boy fell from a horse in motion, with fatal results, the horse was impounded; but if the fall took place while the horse was standing still, there was no deodand. It was the duty of the Coroner's jury to decide not only the instrument of death but its value, in order that the Crown might get its due. Naturally, these forfeitures were extremely unpopular; and it became the practice for juries, with the connivance of the judges, to fix trifling values in order to defeat what was felt to be an inequitable claim. This led,

among other causes, to the abolition of deodands by an Act of 1846.

With this we take our leave of the Petty Cash accounts, regretting that there are not more of them to furnish us with intimate glimpses of the lives led by our forefathers in the times of the later Stuarts.

VIII

CHARLES DU BOIS, TREASURER

IN the quiet and spacious graveyard that surrounds the parish church of Mitcham lies a low, flat tomb. The stone that covers it has been broken into six pieces—possibly this occurred during the rebuilding of the church in 1819–22—and the inscriptions on its surface are weatherworn and dim. There is a melancholy look of neglect about the grave that is heightened by the trim appearance of others close at hand, and one might almost fancy that it was crouching close to the church wall in order to hide its dilapidated condition. Its only friends are flowers of the humbler sort—the daisy, the buttercup, the eyebright—which gem the grass around and help the mantling ivy to hide the wounds of time. And this is well; for the dust inside the tomb is that of one who loved flowers above all things, and whose principal claim to remembrance—though he was an honoured and trusted servant of the East India Company—is that he was able to be of some service in promoting the study of botany in England.

Charles Du Bois belonged to a French Protestant family that had been domiciled in England for at least two generations before him. He was the eldest son of John Du Bois, citizen and weaver of London, and was born about 1653. His mother, whose maiden name, we gather, was Herle, died while he was still a boy; and in the autumn of 1662

his father, who was then dwelling in the parish of St. Mary Aldermanbury, led to the altar, as his second wife, Sarah Waldo, spinster, aged twenty-two, and daughter of Ann Waldo, of All Hallows, Honey Lane, widow (*Marriage Allegations*, Harleian Society, vol. xxiv. p. 64). From this marriage ensued a numerous progeny, for no less than six sons (besides Charles) and one daughter are mentioned in their father's will (Somerset House : 169 Hare).

Concerning John Du Bois the elder we have but scanty information. The chief feature of such as is available is his close association with Thomas Papillon—that sturdy advocate of liberal principles, alike in politics and commerce. Both were of French Protestant descent ; they were about the same age ; and they seem to have thought alike on most subjects of importance. Du Bois comes first into view in 1657, when he and Papillon were selected by the French Church in London to remonstrate with the Committee appointed by Cromwell to settle disputes in that body (*Memoirs of Thomas Papillon*, by A. F. W. Papillon, p. 49). After that we hear nothing of him until 1681, when he was elected a Committee of the East India Company. Papillon, who was at that time Deputy-Governor, was vigorously struggling against the Tory section of the Company, headed by Sir Josia Child, and doubtless he was anxious to have the support of his old friend. The contest between the two parties came to a head shortly after, and Papillon's endeavour to widen the basis of the Company by starting a new Joint Stock was defeated. At the election of 1682 he was replaced as Deputy by Robert Thomson, but was made a Committee for that year, at the close of which (April, 1683) he retired. Du Bois, however, remained a Committee until his death.

The two friends were also associated in another cam-

paign against Tory influence, this time on a more conspicuous stage. By the summer of 1682 the contest between the Court party and the Whigs, who were determined to exclude the Duke of York from the succession, was turning in favour of the former; but the outlook was still grave, and it appeared to be a matter of the highest importance that the government of the City of London should be in the hands of persons devoted to the King. The Lord Mayor was already on the side of the Court, and it was resolved to strain every nerve to secure the election of two Sheriffs who would be equally subservient. The candidates chosen for this purpose were the well-known Dudley North and a certain Ralph Box; and they were accordingly presented to the citizens on Midsummer Day for election. The Whigs, however, had nominated Papillon and Du Bois as their candidates, and it was soon evident that the meeting was overwhelmingly in their favour. The Lord Mayor, in order to prevent their election, declared the Court adjourned; but the citizens would not listen to him, and under the guidance of the old Sheriffs, who were Whigs, declared Papillon and Du Bois duly elected. The King, however, was determined not to be foiled; Pilkington and Shute, the retiring Sheriffs, were sent to the Tower on the charge of abetting a riot; the election was declared void, and a fresh one ordered. This resulted in Papillon and Du Bois being again returned; but the Lord Mayor ignored the decision and announced that the two Court candidates had been chosen. A little later the struggle was renewed in the Law Courts. In February, 1684, Papillon and Du Bois issued writs against the Lord Mayor, Sir William Pritchard, for making a false return; and on his refusing to enter an appearance he was arrested and detained in custody for six hours—an incident

which created a great sensation. The actions were abandoned; and Pritchard retaliated by claiming from Papillon £10,000 damages for false imprisonment. The trial took place in November, before Chief Justice Jeffreys (*Howell's State Trials*, vol. x. p. 319), who bullied in his well-known manner all concerned in the defence, and secured a verdict for the full amount claimed. Papillon felt no scruple in evading an award so palpably unjust; he therefore mortgaged his estates to his son-in-law and fled to Utrecht, where he remained until the Revolution made it safe for him to return to London.

Possibly Pritchard, having disposed of his most formidable antagonist, would have taken similar measures against Du Bois; but by the date of the trial the latter was dead. The actual date of his decease has not been found; but he last attended a Court meeting at the East India House on October 3, and his burial, in the parish church of St. Mary Aldermanbury, is registered under the date of October 30, 1684. His will was proved on the 5th of the following month.

A little more than six years later (April, 1691), his son John became a Committee, although he was then only about twenty-six years of age. He had married, in the previous July, Anna, daughter of William Sedgwick of Crutched Friars—also a Committee of the Company, by the way—and he was then described as "of St. Mary Aldermanbury, merchant, bachelor, about 25," while his bride was seven years younger (*Marriage Allegations*, Harleian Society, vol. xxxi. p. 149). He remained a member of the Court for six and a half years, and then made the connexion still closer by becoming a salaried servant of the Company. On September 28, 1697, Mr. Portman, the Cashier-General, was called upon to resign his

post; and two days later John Du Bois was appointed to the vacancy at a salary of £200 with £100 a year gratuity. This, of course, necessitated his retirement from the Court. The step may seem a downward one, hinting a decline in his fortunes; but it does not follow that Du Bois was entirely restricted from trade on his own account, and it is certain that only a man of some substance would have been chosen for so responsible a post.

John the younger took up his duties at a critical moment. We have narrated above the story of the struggle between the Company and the body which was chartered to take its place in 1698; and here we may recall that it was his hand that inscribed in the books of the new "General Society" the momentous entry ("I, John Du Bois, doe subscribe for £315,000") that, as already noted, secured for the members of the Old Company a commanding position in the struggle, and virtually brought about the ensuing amalgamation. He did not live, however, to see the full fruits of his action. Luttrell, in his *Brief Historical Relation* (vol. v. p. 218), notes under the date of September 26, 1702: "Some dayes since died . . . Mr. Dubois, Treasurer to the old East India Company"; and his will (156, Hern) was proved on the 16th of the following month. He could only have been about thirty-seven at the time of his death. Perhaps his best claim to remembrance is the part he is said to have played in helping to introduce the cultivation of rice into Carolina. According to the anonymous author of *The Importance of the British Plantations in America* (1701),[1] the actual introduction was due to the captain of a brigantine from Madagascar, who gave some seed rice to one of the planters; but "it is likewise reported that Mr. Dubois, then Treasurer

[1] Quoted in Anderson's *Origin of Commerce*, ed. 1801, vol. iii. p. 15.

of the East India Company, did send to that country a small bag of seed rice some short time after," and thus originated a second variety. Milburn, by the way, in his *Oriental Commerce* (vol. ii. p. 237) gives the whole credit to Du Bois.

He was succeeded as Cashier-General by his step-brother Charles, the subject of the present article, who was appointed to the post, on the same terms as the late occupant, on October 27, 1702,[1] giving security in £4000 for the faithful discharge of his duties. The final amalgamation of the two Companies necessitated a reconsideration of the list of officers, but on May 27, 1709, Charles Du Bois was confirmed in his post. We may note in passing that at the time of the union he held stock to the value of £2885, 12s., while his stepbrothers, Ebenezer and Samuel, held £602, 13s. 2d. and £3049, 2s. respectively, and a further sum of £1222, 5s. 2d. was standing in the name of the late John Du Bois.

In addition to his post of Cashier-General (or Treasurer, as he was often termed) Charles Du Bois was one of the seven Trustees of the Old East India Company, having among his colleagues Edward Gibbon, the grandfather of the historian. This worthy merchant, as his grandson tells us, was one of the directors of the South Sea Company, on the failure of which he, in common with his colleagues, was deprived by Act of Parliament of almost all his fortune in order to afford compensation for the victims. He thus lost nearly £100,000, but with the £10,000 left to him he

[1] A Charles Du Bois had been a Committee from April, 1698, and continued in that capacity until April, 1709; but unless the duplication was specially allowed (which is unlikely), this must have been another Charles, possibly a brother of the elder John. A Charles Du Bois, by the way, attended the funeral of Samuel Pepys in June, 1703, and was given a ring, value 15s.

in sixteen years more raised his fortune to nearly its former height. The duties of the Trustees were comparatively light, to judge by some books still preserved at the India Office, containing their proceedings from 1737 to 1749 and the letters of their clerk from 1723 to 1729. Evidently conviviality was not forgotten, for we find numerous invitations to dinner at the Anchor Tavern in Chancery Lane, Owen's Coffee-house in Symond's Inn, or "Calhuack's" in Finch Lane. Gibbon died in December, 1736, and Du Bois then became the sole surviving Trustee. A curious echo of his tenure of the post occurred as late as 1783, when Dr. John Clerk, his executor, found and forwarded to the East India House "three seals made use of by the Old East India Company," which had evidently been in Du Bois' custody in that capacity.

For many years we find no reference in the *Court Minutes* to the Company's Treasurer, beyond occasional gratuities to him for long and faithful service. On March 27, 1723, he was granted 500 guineas; and on March 8, 1732, a similar amount was given to him, with an allowance of £50 per annum for house-rent. Two years later, however, a serious trouble came upon him. On June 12, 1734, the Committee of the Treasury reported that they had found a deficiency in the cash of about £11,000, arising from the officers taking buyers' notes instead of cash in clearing goods (despite strict orders to the contrary) and lending money to the House officials. Du Bois and a clerk named Tulidge (who seems to have been chiefly responsible) were called up and examined, with the result that the latter was suspended. There was no imputation of dishonesty on the part of Du Bois; but he could not be acquitted of a culpable lack of supervision, to say nothing of his dereliction of duty in not acquainting the Court with the state of

affairs. Of course the matter could not be concealed from the shareholders, and a General Court was held on July 24, at which the scandal was discussed. A memorial from Du Bois was read, pleading his great age and his long service. He threw all the blame on Tulidge, declaring that the latter had, four years back, without his knowledge accepted the notes of merchants to an amount between £30,000 and £40,000; that he himself, on discovering this, had feared to disclose it lest the position of the debtors should be irretrievably shaken and the money lost to the Company, and so he had gone quietly to work and had got in the greater part of the amount; that further he had extracted £1500 from Tulidge, besides bonds for more; and that on the whole, after deducting money owing by officials (£1931), which could be recovered from their salaries, the deficiency would not much exceed £3000. Personally, he declared, he had never drawn any illicit profit from his position, though sixty millions sterling had passed through the Treasury during his period of service; and he claimed that in the fatal year of the South Sea crash he had saved the Company many thousands. His liability to refund the deficiency he did not deny, but he begged his employers to be merciful. And merciful they were, for they consented to accept £300 from him in full discharge of his liability, and continued him in his post, in spite of the fact that he was eighty years of age. Nay more, they gave him a gratuity of £150 in December, 1737, and a similar amount on April 10, 1740. One cannot but think that he must have enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the Court to an uncommon degree to induce them to treat him with such generosity.

This unhappy occurrence must have grievously overshadowed the few years that remained to him. Other-

wise, it is probable, they were happy enough, for he had an absorbing hobby and the means of pursuing it on a considerable scale. From his father he had inherited [1] a house with a large garden at Mitcham, and there he devoted himself to rearing exotic plants and collecting dried specimens of all kinds of flowers. His position at the East India House gave him opportunities for obtaining contributions from India; and his stepbrother Daniel (who died at Madras in 1702), Dr. E. Bulkley, and W. Hancocke helped largely in forming his herbarium. He does not appear to have written much on his favourite subject, but his name occurs as contributing observations to the second edition of Ray's *Synopsis* (1724). Naturally he got into correspondence with other botanists, especially with Dr. William Sherard, who founded the Chair of Botany at Oxford, and Dr. Dillenius, the first occupant of that post; [2] and it is quite probable that he made the acquaintance of the celebrated Linnæus, when the latter visited England in 1736. His close friendship with Sherard no doubt determined Du Bois to leave his collection to the University of Oxford, where it is still a treasured possession. It consists, we are told, of about thirteen thousand sheets, which formerly filled seventy-four folio volumes, but have now been cut up and rearranged. The period covered by the collection is from 1690 to 1723.[3] In commemoration of his services to botany, Brown established his genus *Duboisia*.

Charles Du Bois died at Mitcham in October, 1740—

[1] I owe this information, as also the date and place of the burial of John Du Bois the elder, to Mr. R. Garraway Rice, F.S.A., who has made extensive researches into the history of the several Mitcham families.

[2] See Nichols' *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i. pp. 374, etc.

[3] *Some Account of the Herbarium of the University of Oxford*, by G. C. Druce, pp. 7, 8.

on the 21st according to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, on the 20th if we may accept the evidence of his tombstone. The inscription on the latter, so far as one can read it, runs as follows: "[Charles] Du Bois, Esq., ob. 20 Oct. A.D. 1740, ætat. 83." Of its ruinous condition we have already spoken.

Apparently he never married; but he seems to have delighted to gather into his home the surviving members of his family. The Samuel Du Bois who is recorded to have died at Mitcham on February 7, 1730, was no doubt his stepbrother. Ebenezer, another stepbrother, survived Charles for several years; he died on April 14, 1747, at the age of sixty-seven, and his is the third inscription on the tombstone. To that same grave came in time two of the children of the Daniel Du Bois already mentioned as having died in Madras in 1702. Probably Charles took charge of the children he had left behind him—a son named Waldo, and two daughters named Mary and Sarah Charlotte respectively. Waldo was in 1713 admitted to the East India House, while still a boy, as a clerk in the Private Trade Office without salary, and three years later was sent to China as a writer to the supercargoes. He made several other voyages to that country, and rose as high as third supercargo; but in his haste to be rich he overreached himself and was implicated in a mean and dishonest attempt to defraud his employers. At a General Court held on August 5, 1730, the Chairman announced that six of the supercargoes of the fleet last returned (Waldo Du Bois amongst them) had conspired to falsify their accounts, in spite of the liberal terms on which they were employed, "insomuch that the chief supracargo might fairly and honestly gain upon the success of one voyage from eight to ten thousand pounds, and the rest in proportion." An

THE DU BOIS TOMB

action was thereupon brought against the culprits in the Court of Chancery. For a time they showed fight; but, finding their case hopeless, they compromised the matter by the payment to the Company of close upon £15,000. This peculiarly discreditable incident must have given Waldo's uncle much pain, particularly as the latter had his own secret trouble worrying him just then. Waldo is not mentioned in Charles's will (264 Browne); but this may have been due to his having already amassed a sufficient fortune. He lived on till February 20, 1746, and was buried with his uncle at Mitcham. Of his sisters, Mary had married a Peter Waldo, probably a distant cousin, and we hear no more of her; but Sarah Charlotte remained a spinster, devoting herself to works of charity. Hers is the last inscription on the grave, which tells us that she died on April 12, 1757, aged fifty-nine years and three months, adding the brief eulogy: "*Qualis erat testantur pauperes: nec plus fas est.*" No doubt it was she to whom the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1757 referred as the "Mrs. Dubois, of Mitcham, a French Protestant lady, who has left to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Foundling Hospital, and Protestant schools in Ireland, £500 each."

The memory of the Du Bois family still lingers at Mitcham. According to information for which I am indebted to Mr. Robert M. Chart, J.P., the house they occupied stood facing the Upper Green, on the eastern side of the present Whitford Gardens. The grounds were about fifteen acres in extent and now form the Elmwood building estate. Apparently the original mansion was pulled down about the end of the eighteenth century, and was replaced by another which in its turn was demolished in 1903; and a portion of the surrounding wall, dating

back probably to 1664, is the only relic that remains of Du Bois' dwelling. Nor have I succeeded in finding a portrait of the worthy Treasurer. To myself I figure him as a kindly old gentleman in spectacles, riding down from London on a Friday evening, and reining in his nag to a walk as the lavender fields of Mitcham come into view ; or later on, seated in his library over a cup of tea, telling his niece the news of the town and turning over the leaves of a botanical treatise to settle some question which has occurred to him during his journey ; or next morning, in a shabby coat and with a bandanna handkerchief tied round his head, pottering about his sunny garden and in and out of his greenhouses, marking the progress of his latest importations and scribbling additions to his notes. It is thus I picture him, rather than in his dark little room at the East India House ; and with this vignette lingering in the memory we may take our leave of Charles Du Bois.

IX

THE REBUILDING IN 1726–29

TOWARDS the close of the reign of our first Hanoverian sovereign, the Company found it necessary to rebuild its premises. But before dealing with this important chapter in the history of the East India House, it may be well to say a few words regarding the outward appearance of the edifice which was thus destroyed. What, then, was the first India House like? Unfortunately we have but meagre descriptions of it in the early topographical accounts of London. Strype in his (1720) edition of Stow's *Survey* (book ii. p. 88) has the fullest. According to him it was "a very large building, with spacious rooms very commodious for such a publick concern. It hath a large hall and courtyard for the reception of people who hath business here, to attend on the Company on their Court days. There belongs to it also a garden, with warehouses in the back part towards Lime Street, into which there is a back gate for the entrance of carts to bring their goods into their warehouses." This tells us nothing that we did not know before; and nothing more is added by Defoe's description of it (*Tour through Great Britain*, 1724) as "an old but spacious building, very convenient, though not beautiful," or by the brief reference in Ned Ward's *London Spy* (1698) to the outward appearance of the House. "Passing along Leadenhall Street," he says, "I saw some ships painted upon a great wall, which

occasioned me to enquire of my schoolfellow what place that was. He told me 'twas the house belonging to the East India Company, which are a corporation of men with long heads and deep purposes."

There are, however, three independent views of the building which give a good idea of what the street front was like. These we may designate the "Dutch," the "Overley," and the "Vertue." They differ in certain details, and only to one—the last—can we assign an exact date. It is worth while, therefore, to make a careful examination of each.

The "Dutch" view—so called from the Dutch legend engraved at the top—is only known from an etching stated to be "from a painting in the possession of Mr. Pulham of the India House, twelve inches by eight." James Brook Pulham, the friend and fellow-clerk of Charles Lamb, besides being a bit of an antiquary—witness his "Collections for a History of the East India Company" now in the British Museum (Addl. MS. 24,934) and his notes on George Wither—was an amateur etcher of some ability, and no doubt the present engraving is his work. Probably only a few copies were struck off for private circulation; and what became of the plate or of the original painting we have been unable to discover.[1]

It is unnecessary to enter upon a detailed description of a print which the reader is in a position to examine for

[1] Soon after the appearance of Pulham's engraving, a copy of it was made by the drawing-master of the Company's military seminary at Addiscombe. It is a much more elegant production than the original; but as Pulham points out with malicious glee in a note appended to the specimen in his "Collections," the artist has made an egregious mistake by substituting the arms of the United Company for the royal coat in the space between the upper windows.

There is a copy of Pulham's own print in the Crace Collection at the British Museum; and another in Addl. MS. 24,934.

THE OLD EAST INDIA HOUSE IN LEADENHALL STREET 1648 TO 1726

FROM A PAINTING IN THE POSSESSION OF [illegible]

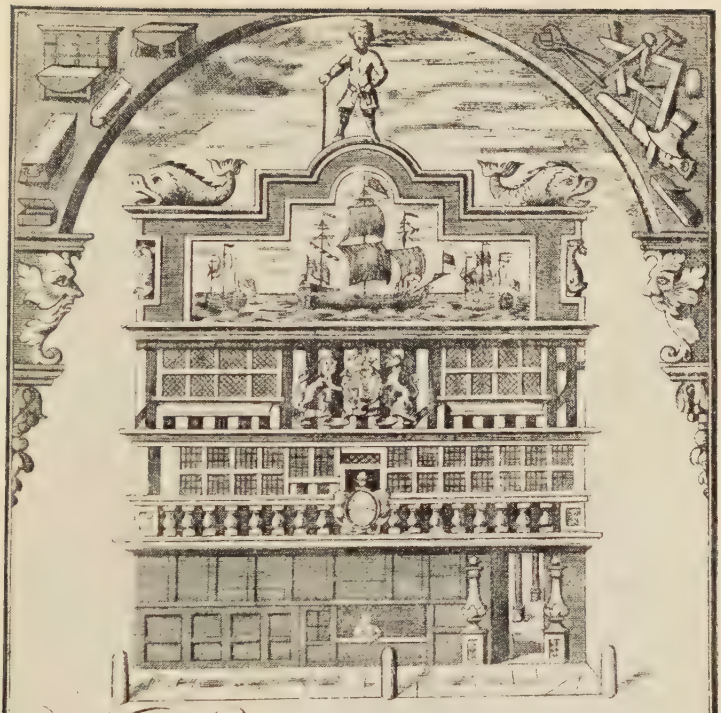
THE DUTCH VIEW

himself; and the only question that need detain us is that of the probable date at which the original was painted. At the first glance, the Puritan costumes of the figures in the foreground suggest that the period is at all events before the Restoration. To this feature, however, we can attach no importance, for it is quite likely that these figures were introduced by Pulham himself. At all events, we know that the ornamental superstructure was not put up till 1661 (see p. 42); and further that down to 1688 there was an upper balcony of which the engraving shows no trace. On the other hand, the appearance of the arms of the Old East India Company shows that the view can hardly be later than 1709, when the use of them was discontinued in consequence of the amalgamation of the two companies; and other important points of difference between this and the "Vertue" print (1711) suggest that its date is much nearer 1688 than 1709.

Turning next to what we have designated the "Overley" engraving, we are confronted by a still greater difficulty in the matter of dates. The view appeared, as the reader will see, on the shop-bill of a certain William Overley, "joyner, at the sign of the East India House, in Leaden-hall Street," and its most interesting feature is the representation of the joiner himself, installed in a little shop close to the entrance (the shop, by the way, appears also in the Dutch view, but is there either closed or untenanted). The print bears in general a close resemblance to the "Dutch" view; but, on looking into minutiæ, we note that the ships are of later date and appear to be carrying the Union flag, first introduced in the reign of Queen Anne; further, that the royal arms are different in style, and are in reality those of George I (1714–27). The latter is a very perplexing discovery, for how can we reconcile it with the

fact that the Old Company's arms are shown as still in position, and that some other features distinctly indicate that the print is considerably earlier than the "Vertue" view of 1711? The only explanation that commends itself is that Overley did at one time occupy the little shop near the entrance (though no trace can be found of the matter in the *Court Minutes*); that while there he had a shop-bill prepared to advertise his wares; that after a while, as the Company's needs in the matter of accommodation increased, he was dispossessed and moved to other premises in Leadenhall Street, retaining the East India House as his sign; and that, at some date during the reign of the first Hanoverian, he had a fresh bill prepared, in which the artist, while copying the old one in the main, inserted the new royal arms. This view is supported by the fact that in a scarce little book entitled *New Remarks of London . . . collected by the Company of Parish Clerks* (London, 1732) it is stated that the last house on the south side of Leadenhall Street within the bounds of the parish of St. Andrew Undershaft was that of "Mr. Ovely, a box-maker," who is no doubt our worthy joiner. This would place him a little on the east side of Leadenhall, and four or five doors from his old premises at the India House.[1] It was, by the way, the representation on Overley's shop-bill, as reproduced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for December, 1784, that furnished the materials for Macaulay's well-known description of the East India House as "an edifice of timber and plaster, rich with the quaint carving and lattice work of the Elizabethan age. Above

[1] This has since been confirmed by an examination of the deeds relating to a house in the position indicated which was acquired and pulled down by the Company in 1826. William Overley is named as one of the tenants previous to 1747.



Will.m Overley Joyner at the Sign of the East India Houfe in Leaden-hall Street LONDON Makes all Sorts of Tea Chefts in Deal or Wainfcot, Ruff or Smooth Packing Chests or Cafes, and Cafes of Bottles, & Boxes of all Sizes, Preffes in Deal or Wainscot, & Bedfteds, Tables, Desks, Book Cafes, Bureaus & Writing Desks, Letter holes, & Drawrs for Shops. Alfo Counters and all forts of Joyners worke done at Reafonable Rates

THE OVERLEY VIEW

the windows was a painting which represented a fleet of merchantmen tossing on the waves. The whole was surmounted by a colossal wooden seaman, who from between two dolphins looked down on the crowds of Leadenhall Street."

We come now to the most interesting of all—the drawing made by George Vertue, in 1711, which is reproduced as the frontispiece of the present volume. That it is by Vertue (whose work it certainly resembles) is stated on an etching made by W. B. Rye in 1851, at which time the drawing was in the possession of Robert Graves, A.R.A., who subsequently sold it. Inquiries for it in all directions proved futile, and I had given up all hope, when in a London bookshop I chanced upon what I believe—and the belief is supported by expert opinion—to be the very drawing. The date is supplied by the inscription on a copy now in the Print Department of the British Museum (Crowle's *Grangerized Pennant*, vol. xii. no. 68). As compared with the "Dutch" and "Overley" views, it presents several points of interest. The dolphins have disappeared from the top of the building; while the ships have been repainted (if the representation is accurate in this respect) and their number has been increased. The royal arms are those of the later years of Queen Anne, and those of the Company are no longer visible. The shop too has gone, and has been replaced by boarding with lights along the top; while the door is now a double one, studded with nails.

To resume the history of the House. In spite of frequent repairs, by the time the first quarter of the century had sped its course the old mansion which Sir Robert Lee had erected had reached such a stage of decrepitude that rebuilding had become a necessity; in addition to which,

the great increase of the Company's business imperatively required the provision of additional accommodation With an eye, no doubt, to the latter contingency, the Company had (as we have seen) purchased from time to time several of the premises adjoining. In June, 1723, it was determined to pull down the Ship alehouse, and, if practicable, to build a substantial brick wall from the Back Treasury as far as Mr. Burroughs' house. Two years later (November, 1725) the question of a general rebuilding was taken in hand. A strong Committee was appointed "to view and examine the state of the buildings in and about the House, and what alterations are needfull to be made for the better security of the House." Evidently no time was lost, for on Christmas Eve it was decided to take as temporary offices the house in Fenchurch Street lately in the occupation of the Commissioners of Customs. This building, which stood on the south side of Fenchurch Street, just to the west of the present Northumberland Alley (having been erected on the site of the old town house of the Earls of Northumberland), was accordingly rented from its owners, Messrs. Moses Helbut and Charles Gore, at £150 a year, commencing at Christmas, 1725.[1] The Company probably moved into its temporary home some time in March, 1726, for on the 16th of that month a General Court was held there, at which the Chairman informed the assembly "that the occasion of their meeting at this house was that, the East India House being very old

[1] In January, 1734, this house and two more in Northumberland Alley were purchased by the Company at a total cost of £4150. On the site thus obtained, enlarged by further purchases in 1735 and 1736, a large pile of warehouses was erected, long familiar to Londoners as the Company's Tea and Drug Warehouses. They were completed towards the close of 1736, and on October 8 the Court voted 25 guineas for a "raising dinner" to the workmen. Within recent times a new street (Lloyds' Avenue) has been driven through the site.

and in great danger of falling down, the Company's business would be carryed on in Fenchurch Street till the other house is rebuilt."

Already the design of the new building had been decided upon. A special committee had been appointed in February to consider the plans, and on March 4 they recommended, and the Court approved, " that the ground plat and front presented by Theodore Jacobsen, Esq.," should be adopted. The architect thus chosen was apparently an amateur, for he came of a wealthy family and was himself a merchant.[1] When the new building was completed, the Directors formally thanked him for his assistance and proposed (August, 1730) to present him with a piece of plate of the value of two hundred guineas ; but this was afterwards changed, at his request, to a ring of equal value.

It is to be regretted that Jacobsen's plans have not been preserved, as in their absence we have no means of determining how far parts of the old building—particularly the recent additions—were worked into the new. Evidently all the space between the original front and Leadenhall Street was taken in, and the building was thus brought flush with the pavement. It would seem that some objection was raised to this proceeding, for the *Minutes* of October 26, 1726, note that the Court of Aldermen, after examining the complaints from the inhabitants of the Ward, had decided that there was no encroachment at the New East India House.

All through 1727, 1728, and well into 1729 the work

[1] He afterwards designed the Foundling Hospital (1742), of which he was a Governor (his portrait by Hudson is still preserved there), and the Royal Hospital for Sailors at Haslar (1751). He died in May, 1772, and was buried in the church of All Hallows, Thames Street.

went on, advances being made from time to time to the various persons employed; for the work was not entrusted to a single contractor, but was parcelled out to different tradesmen. There was, however, a general "surveyor," Mr. James, to whom the Company paid a fee of £300, with a final gratuity of fifty guineas. We note payments to Messrs. Goodson & Cooper for bricklaying, to Edmund Merryweather [1] for smiths' work, to John Read for carpentering, to Joseph Thompson for painting, to Richard Smith for plumbing, to William Smith for plastering, to Thomas Shepherd for masonry, and to Thomas Knight for slaters' work. For carving the stonework John Bosson received £100. Altogether the amount expended appears to have been well over £15,000; but this includes work on the new warehouses in Lime Street, and it is not possible to say exactly what was the cost of the House itself.

At last, in June, 1729, the building was finished and the Midsummer General Court was held in the Company's new home. Its aspect is well shown in the accompanying illustration: a plain four-story stone building, solid and serviceable, but with no pretensions to beauty. Two years after its completion it was thus described by the topographer who assumed the name of "Don Manoel Gonzales": "On the south side of Leadenhall Street also, and a little to the eastward of Leadenhall, stands the East India House, lately magnificently built, with a stone front to the street; but the front, being very narrow,[2] does not

[1] In December, 1728, the Court were presented with a proof of Mr. Merryweather's energy in the shape of a complaint from a neighbouring shopkeeper that he "had drove a large iron through the wall into his shop, whereby he broke as many glasses as cost him £8 and upwards." This claim was left for the House Committee to settle.

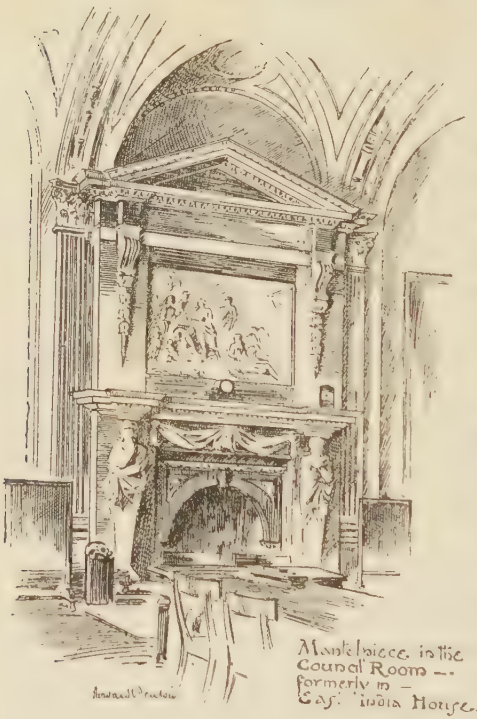
[2] The original front of about thirty feet had been increased to seventy by the absorption of the sites of the *Bell* and the *Ship*, but it was still disproportionate to the depth of the building.

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE, 1766

make an appearance answerable to the grandeur of the house within, which stands upon a great deal of ground, the offices and storehouses admirably well contrived, and the public hall and committee room scarce inferior to anything of the like nature in the City."

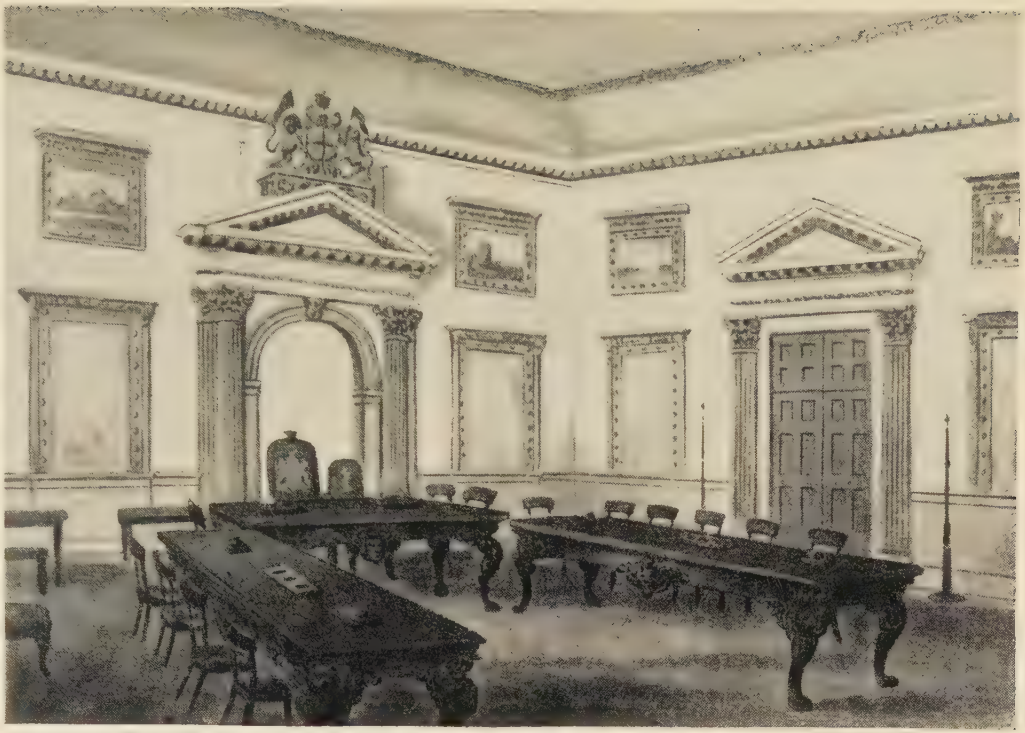
The description given in James Noorthouck's *New History of London*, 1773 (p. 663), may also be quoted, though obviously it is partly an echo of Strype's earlier account: "Between Leadenhall and Lime-street stands the East India House, for conducting the public business of that Company. This edifice was built in the year 1726, on the spot where antiently stood the townhouse of the Earls of Craven. The front, which is but narrow, is supported by six Doric pilasters on a rustic basement story; there are two series of plain windows in the intercolumniations, and the top is finished with a balustrade. It has been remarked that the appearance of the building is nowise suited to the opulence of the Company, whose servants exercise sovereign authority in their Indian territories and live there in princely state. The house, however, though small in front, extends far backward and is very spacious, having large rooms for the use of the directors and offices for the clerks. It has a spacious hall and courtyard for the reception of those who have business and who attend on the Company on court days, which are every Wednesday. There also belong to it a garden, with warehouses in the back part toward Lime-street, to which there is a gate for the entrance of carts to bring in goods. These warehouses were rebuilt in a very handsome manner in the year 1725, and are now greatly enlarged. The Company have likewise warehouses in Leadenhall-street, Fenchurch-street, Seething-lane, and the Stillyard, beside cellars for pepper under the Royal Exchange."

As regards the fitting up of the interior, we may note that probably a good deal of the beautiful furniture still in use at the India Office was purchased by the Company at this time. For instance, the walnut arm-chair, now occupied by the Secretary of State when he presides over the meetings of his Council, belongs either to this or to a slightly subsequent period. It is beautifully carved, with a high back surmounted by a crowned head of Neptune, while on the red velvet panel the arms of the East India Company are embroidered in coloured silks and silver thread. Then, too, the six oil paintings, representing Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Tellicherry, Cape Town, and St. Helena, which now adorn the Military Committee Room of the Westminster building, were, we find, provided in 1732 for the decoration of the Court Room. They were the work of George Lambert and Samuel Scott—the former depicting the buildings, etc., and the latter the ships—and were paid for at the moderate price of fifteen guineas a picture. Some of them appear in the picture here given of the Court Room.



Mantelpiece in the Council Room — formerly in — East India House.

THE CHAIRMAN'S SEAT



THE DIRECTORS' COURT ROOM

Finally, we may point to a very beautiful relic of this period in the India Office Council Room, namely, the centrepiece of the magnificent fireplace there. This is the "piece of statuary marble over the chimney in the Court Room" for which £100 was ordered to be paid to "Michael Rysbrack" on April 22, 1730. It represents Britannia, seated on the seashore, receiving the offerings of India, while two female figures standing behind, one with a camel, the other with a lion, typify Asia and Africa respectively; on the right is a river god to represent the Thames, and in the background ships are going off to sea. The artist, John Michael Rysbrack, was a Fleming by birth, but had made his home in England in 1720. His talents won the warm encomiums of Horace Walpole, and until the rise of Scheemakers and Roubiliac he was by common consent at the head of his profession.

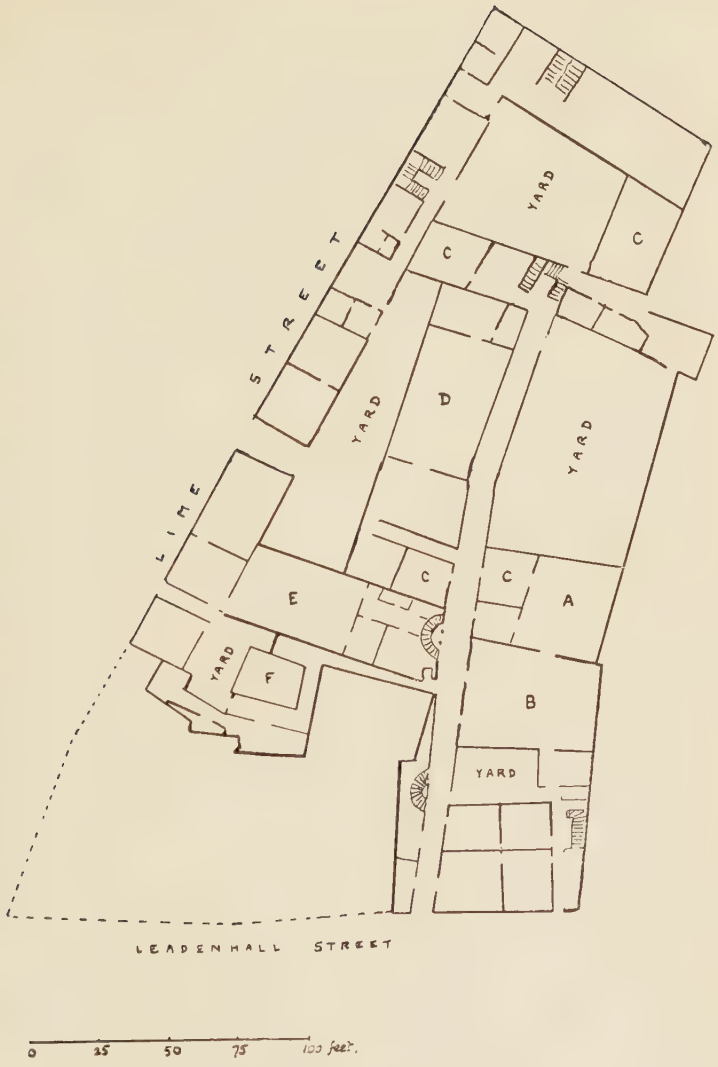
X

THE LATER HISTORY OF THE BUILDING

IN the middle of the eighteenth century the Company increased its accommodation by building additional offices and warehouses on the east and south of the East India House. The leases of the tenants who occupied the houses bought from Brigginshaw in 1717 expired at midsummer, 1753, and these premises were then pulled down; while a few months later (as already mentioned) a piece of property on the eastern side in the occupation of Giles Vincent was purchased. On the ground thus set free some additional warehouses, a new Pay Office, and a house (afterwards occupied by the Deputy Secretary) were erected from design by William Jones, who had recently been appointed Surveyor to the Company.[1] On the south the extension appears to have overleapt the parish boundary, for in May, 1754, the parishioners of St. Andrew Undershaft made representations concerning "an obstruction to their coming at the parish bounds next St. Peter's, Cornhill, by the new building the Court are erecting at the back of this House."

The internal arrangement of the building in February, 1796, is shown in the accompanying plan, taken from one drawn by Richard Jupp and now preserved at the India

[1] The celebrated gardens at Ranelagh (opened in 1742) were planned by him.



THE INTERIOR IN 1796

Office. In this A is the Court Room, B the Sale Room, C represents the various Committee Rooms, D the Transfer Office, E the Pay Office, and F the Deputy Secretary's House.

Jacobsen's building, as thus enlarged by Jones, satisfied the needs of the Company for a long period of years, and it was not until the eighteenth century had nearly reached its end that another, and final, reconstruction took place. By that time the character and functions of the Company had undergone a remarkable change. It was no longer a mere trading body : it was a territorial power, with a vast revenue, maintaining large military and naval forces and ruling millions of alien subjects. Yet externally its home remained the same insignificant building ; while internally the wonderful making of history that had gone on under (or rather in spite of) the Company's control was chiefly commemorated by the addition of a few statues and paintings.

Of the statues the principal were the three, representing Lord Clive, General Stringer Lawrence, and Sir George Pocock, which Peter Scheemakers had been commissioned to carve in 1760, in order that the " eminent and signal services " of those warriors might be " ever had in remembrance " ; these were finished in 1764 and were then placed in niches in the General Court Room. Twenty years later a statue of Sir Eyre Coote was ordered to be added, the work being entrusted to Thomas Banks ; and in 1798 this distinguished group was joined by a fifth figure—that of the Marquess Cornwallis, by John Bacon. In the following spring a suggestion was made for a further addition. A meeting was being held in the General Court Room for the purpose of deciding what reward should be given to Lord Nelson for his victory over the French

Fleet in Aboukir Bay, by which Napoleon's designs on India had been irretrievably shattered; and Sir Francis Baring, pointing to the statues overhead, proposed that the Company should "place the Hero of the Nile by the side of the Heroes of the Ganges." This idea, however, failed to commend itself to the assembly; and, the matter having been left to the Court of Directors, the recognition of the Admiral's services took the form of a gift of ten thousand pounds.[1]

At the time of this meeting the reconstruction of the House was nearly completed, after about two years' work. The scheme was a magnificent one. Apparently Jacobsen's building, including the General Court Room and the Directors' Court Room, was to be left practically untouched, save that the portion nearest the street was to be altered to form the western wing of the new front. The latter was to extend eastwards as far as the corner of Lime Street, and all the property in that direction not already in the occupation of the Company was likewise to be absorbed into the new premises. This meant the purchase of a square block of buildings abutting on Leadenhall Street and Lime Street; and from 1794 to 1797 the Company's lawyers were busy with the acquisition of the various properties. An application to Parliament was found to be necessary, owing to the fact that two of the plots which the Company were desirous of securing were charged with annual payments for charitable purposes, while a third belonged to Christ's Hospital. This, however, presented no insuperable difficulty. Equitable terms were agreed upon with the trustees, the Company

[1] Nelson's letter, acknowledging the gift, is still to be seen in the India Office Library. It has been reproduced in facsimile in *Relics of the Honourable East India Company.*

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE BEFORE REBUILDING

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE AFTER REBUILDING

at the same time consenting to surrender to the public sufficient ground to permit of Lime Street being widened to 22 feet at the northern end; and these arrangements were sanctioned by Act 36 of Geo. III, cap. 119 (May, 1796).

The task of designing the new building and superintending its erection was entrusted to Richard Jupp, the Company's Surveyor. Evidently there had been some idea of employing another architect, and in the Soane Museum may still be seen a design submitted by Mr. (afterwards Sir) John Soane. But on August 5, 1796, Jupp addressed to the Court of Directors a pathetic letter, reminding them of his twenty-nine years of faithful service and imploring them not to deprive him of this opportunity of distinguishing himself. The plea was listened to, and on August 9 the House Committee was instructed "to consider of and agree upon a plan for building on the ground contiguous to the India House, under the advice of Mr. Jupp, the Company's Surveyor." The latter's design for the exterior was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1798. Its main features are too well known to need a detailed description. The new façade was about 200 feet in length and 60 feet high. Its style was classical, with an Ionic portico of six fluted columns. The tympanum of the pediment was filled with a group of figures designed by John Bacon, representing George III, in Roman costume, defending the commerce of the East. The composition of this excited some criticism, and not without reason; for the King was represented as holding his sword in his left hand in a decidedly unwarlike manner, while the appearance in the background of the City barge was scarcely appropriate. On the apex of the pediment Britannia sat in state upon a lion, bearing in her left hand

a spear surmounted by a cap of liberty; while above the two corners of the pediment were figures of Europe on a horse and Asia on a camel. The rest of the façade was severely plain, with a double row of windows and a projecting cornice crowned by a parapet. On the iron railings in front were fixed half a dozen standards for lamps.

Internally the changes appear to have been confined mostly to the erection of fresh buildings on the additional space which had been acquired. A new central corridor, leading from the entrance vestibule, was made, and certain of the rooms were in consequence reconstructed. Otherwise the chief feature added, beyond a new Pay Office, and some fresh Committee Rooms, seems to have been a new Sale Room, which, after the withdrawal of the Company's trading privileges, became part of the Museum. This was a large apartment, lighted from the top and surrounded by a gallery. Its walls, we are told, were adorned with paintings emblematic of the Company's commerce.[1] Previous to the rebuilding, the sales had been held in the General Court Room, and of the scene on such occasions the accompanying illustration, which is reproduced from Ackermann's *Microcosm of London* (1808), gives an excellent idea. The

[1] For a vivid description of the scene at one of the Company's periodical sales we may have recourse to Charles Knight's *London* (vol. v. p. 59), published in 1843. "Those of tea," he says, "were the most extensive, and they are yet remembered with a sort of dread by all who had anything to do with them. They were held only four times a year—in March, June, September, and December; and the quantity disposed of at each sale was in consequence very large, amounting on many recent occasions to 8½ millions of pounds, and sometimes much higher: they lasted several days, and it is within our recollection that 1,200,000 lbs. have been sold in one day. The only buyers were the tea-brokers, composed of about thirty firms: each broker was attended by the tea-dealers who engaged his services, and who communicated their wishes by nods and winks. In order to facilitate the sale of such large quantities, it was the practice to put up all the teas of one

A SALE AT THE EAST INDIA HOUSE

view is taken from the top of the amphitheatre which filled the eastern end of the apartment. This is occupied by bidders and spectators, while on the other side of the barrier which crosses the floor are seated the presiding Director, two officials in little wooden pulpits noting the bids, and a number of clerks who are entering up bargains or writing out contract notes. Among the latter, by the way, the artist may have noticed a swarthy, Jewish-looking little man who answered to the name of Lamb, and who found the duty of attending sales a tiresome one.

A new Sale Room having been provided, the old one was restricted to its alternative use as a meeting-place for the Court of Proprietors. Although some changes were made in the western end of the room—the number of niches for statues being increased from three to five in the upper tier and from two to four in the lower—in most respects it remained unaltered; and the reader has only to replace the bidders in the picture by the figures of stockholders, and add on the other side of the barrier a bunch of Directors, with the Chairman in the midst, to be present in imagination at an assembly of "the General Court."

quality before proceeding to those of another, and to permit each bidder to proceed without much interruption so long as he confined his biddings to the variation of a farthing for what was technically called the upper and under lot; but as soon as he began to waver, or that it appeared safe to advance another farthing, the uproar became quite frightful to one unaccustomed to it. It often amounted to a howling and yelling which might have put to shame an O.P. row, and, although thick walls intervened, it frequently was heard by the frequenters of Leadenhall Market. All this uproar, which would induce a stranger to anticipate a dreadful onslaught, was usually quelled by the finger of the chairman pointing to the next buyer, whose biddings would be allowed to go on with comparative quietness, but was sure to be succeeded by a repetition of the same noise as at first. At the indigo sales much the same sort of scene took place."

The following extract from Knight's *London* (vol. v. p. 56) gives an apt account of such a meeting :

"The Court of Proprietors, or General Court, as its name imports, is composed of the owners of India Stock. . . . By the law now in force, which was made in 1773, the possession of £1000 gives one vote, although persons having only £500 may be present at the Court : £3000 entitles the owner to two votes, £6000 to three, and £10,000 to four votes.[1] All persons whatever may be members of this Court, male or female, Englishman or foreigner, Christian or unbeliever. The Court of Proprietors elects the Court of Directors, frames bye-laws, declares the dividend, controls grants of money exceeding £600, and additions to salaries above £200. It would appear that the executive power of this Court, having been delegated to the Court of Directors, may be considered as extinct ; at all events it never now interferes with acts of government, although instances have formerly occurred where acts of the Court of Directors have been revised by it. Its functions in fact are deliberative : they are like those of influential public meetings in the English Constitution, and its resolutions are supposed to be respectfully attended to by the Directors, and even by the Legislature. It is always called together to discuss any proceedings in Parliament likely to affect the interests of the Company. It may at any time call for copies of public documents to be placed before the body for deliberation and discussion ; and is empowered to confer a public mark of approbation, pecuniary or otherwise, on any

[1] The number of votes was denoted in the official lists by asterisks placed against the name. Miss Swartz, the mulatto heiress in *Vanity Fair*, had "three stars to her name in the East India stockholders' list."

A GENERAL COURT

individual whose services may appear to merit the distinction, subject, however, to the approbation of the Board of Control in cases where the sum shall exceed £600. The meetings of this Court have much the appearance of those of the House of Commons, and its discussions are conducted by nearly the same rules. The Chairman of the Court of Directors presides *ex officio*, and questions are put through him as through the Speaker. There is occasionally a display of eloquence which would not disgrace the Senate, though more frequently, perhaps, the matters debated are hardly of sufficient general interest to produce so much excitement. Amendments are proposed, adjournments are moved, the previous question is put, the Court rings with cries of 'Hear, hear!' 'Oh, Oh!' etc. etc., and a tedious speaker is coughed down as effectually as he would be on the floor of the House of Commons. At the conclusion of a debate the question is often decided by a show of hands; but if any Proprietor doubts the result he may call for a division, when tellers are appointed, and the Court divides accordingly. In especial cases any nine members may call for an appeal to the general body of Proprietors; to whom timely notice is sent, and the vote is by ballot. The meetings always take place at twelve o'clock, and generally close at dusk; in cases of great interest they are much later, and in a recent instance the debate continued until two o'clock in the following morning. The number of members of the Court of Proprietors in 1843 is 1880, of whom 333 have two votes, 64 three, and 44 four votes. In 1825 there were 2003 Proprietors."

We must now return to our history of the rebuilding. Jupp died on April 17, 1799, when the work was on the point of completion. His successor was Henry Holland,

who some thirty-five years before had designed Claremont for Lord Clive, and had afterwards done much work for the Prince of Wales, both at the Marine Pavilion, Brighton, and at Carlton House in Pall Mall. He was further responsible for the vestibule and portico of what is now Dover House, Whitehall; and by a curious coincidence he was associated with the two principal theatres in London, his work in each case being destroyed by fire. In 1791 he designed Drury Lane Theatre for Sheridan; and a little later he altered and enlarged the rival establishment in Covent Garden. The latter was burnt down in 1808, and the former in the following year. Holland completed Jupp's work at the East India House; and afterwards added a small extension on the western side, where three quaint old shops in Leadenhall Street, standing on the site of the "Green Gate" mansion mentioned by Stow, were purchased by the Company at the end of 1800. On this site was erected a building (with a separate entrance), the lower part of which was used by the Chairman, while the upper portion was granted to the Assistant Secretary. Later on this extension, which was, of course, in the same style as Jupp's façade, was given up to the ever-growing Museum. The Secretary, by the way, had his home next door, in the extreme west of the main front, and he too enjoyed the privilege of a private entrance.

Holland died in 1806, and was succeeded by Samuel Pepys Cockerell (a collateral descendant of the famous diarist), who (together with the famous Soane) had been an unsuccessful candidate for the post at the time of Holland's appointment in May, 1799. On Cockerell's resignation in July, 1824, the post of Surveyor was given to William Wilkins, who had designed Haileybury College for the

LEADENHALL ST. ABOUT 1840

Company eighteen years before.[1] Under his directions were made the final additions to the building. These were at the south-western angle, where a piece of ground, abutting southwards on Leadenhall Place and westwards on a public footpath running from that thoroughfare into Leadenhall Street, was first leased from the City of London from Christmas, 1828, and then, fifteen months later, bought outright for a little over £10,000. This site provided room for a considerable number of additional offices.

A little earlier the front had been improved by the purchase and removal of an old house (No. 12 Leadenhall Street), which stood at the corner of the public footpath already mentioned and was thus on the extreme west of the new front. As far back as 1815 the Company had proposed to buy the ground, but had desisted on finding that a satisfactory title could not be obtained. In 1825 however, it was arranged that, notwithstanding this difficulty, the property should be purchased for a little under £4300, the money being lodged in the hands of trustees until the legal formalities could be completed, a process which took over thirty years. Meanwhile, the tenant's lease had been bought and the house pulled down in 1826. The site was left vacant, enclosed by railings; and the East India House was now uncontaminated by the touch of any other building, north, south, east, or west.

Having thus brought the building to its final stage, it may not be amiss to present a plan showing its development from the start. On this, A represents the original

[1] In 1827–28 Wilkins erected the present University College in Gower Street. His best-known work is of course the National Gallery (1832–38).

Craven House, with (B) its garden, (C) its warehouse, (D) the little tenement at the back gate, and (E) the backyard. The additions made in 1683–86 are marked F. The dotted line shows the extent of the property in 1709. G denotes the property acquired in 1717–22, and H the additions in 1753–54. A broken line indicates the boundary in 1796,

when Jupp's reconstruction began. I marks the ground purchased for this purpose; K the additions made by Holland, and L the portion added by Wilkins. The house pulled down in 1826 is marked M.

The aspect of the East India House as thus completed is shown in the accompanying plate. Though taken from a publication, entitled *Mighty London*, which was published

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE, AS COMPLETED

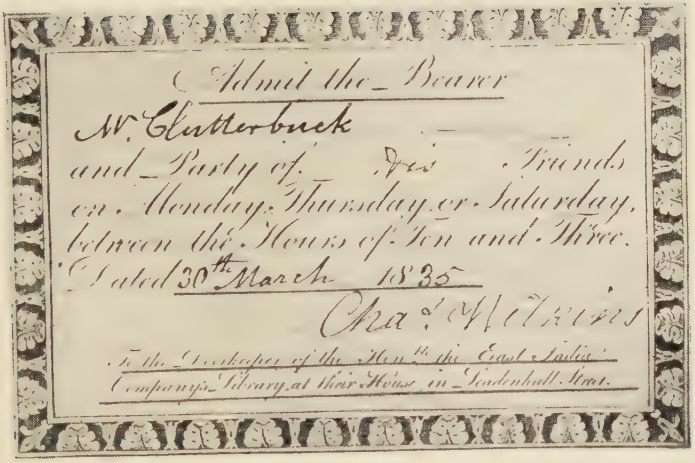
in 1857, it is based on a drawing by T. H. Shepherd; and since that artist died in 1840, his sketch must have been made before that date, though possibly only slightly anterior to it.

The internal decoration of the building by paintings and statues steadily progressed. It would be tedious to enumerate them all; but a few of the principal may be mentioned. At the beginning of the century Mr. William Larkins, formerly Accountant-General at Calcutta, bequeathed to the Company two full-length portraits of Warren Hastings and Lord Cornwallis. The former was the work of George Romney, and in the opinion of many it is by far the finest presentment of the great Governor-General. To-day it occupies the principal position in the Council Room of the India Office. In 1810 a painting of Mirza Abul Hasan, the Persian Ambassador, by Sir William Beechey, was hung in the Finance Committee Room. Ten years later the first Earl of Powis presented a huge picture by Benjamin West of the grant of the Diwani to Lord Clive—a replica of one now at Oakly Park; while about the same time a fine portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte by Borély was given by Mr. John Mangles. The death of Warren Hastings in 1818 produced a movement for some worthy commemoration in the East India House of the great services he had rendered to the Company; and as a result a statue of him by Flaxman was in 1823 added to those already in the General Court Room. Statues of the Marquess Wellesley and of his brother, the Duke of Wellington, were placed in the vacant niches there in 1845 and 1855 respectively; and a little later the Emperor Napoleon III presented to the Company two large portraits of himself and his consort in acknowledgment of its contributions to the Paris

Exhibition of 1855. All these works of art are now in the India Office.

The East India House had thus become a very sumptuous place, and in fact it now took high rank among the "sights of London." To the attractions already enumerated must be added the Library and the Museum. These dated their existence from the beginning of the nineteenth century, though the actual inception of the scheme was a few years earlier. It is said that Robert Orme, the author of *The Military Transactions of the British Nation in India* and Historiographer to the Company, had for some time pressed upon the authorities the desirability of providing a place of deposit for Eastern MSS., where also a collection of books on Indian subjects might be formed for the use of students; and certain it is that Orme, dying before the Library was actually established, bequeathed all his documents, maps, etc., to a friendly Director with the express wish (which was duly carried out) that they might be transferred to the new collection when formed.[1] Jupp's enlargement of the building provided the Company with an opportunity of doing something in this direction; and in May, 1798, a decisive step was taken. A dispatch was addressed to the Bengal Government, intimating the Court's intention to set aside a portion of the new premises to form an "Oriental Repository," and inviting contributions of MSS. from the Company's servants in India. At the beginning of the next year, Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Wilkins, the distinguished Sanskritist, offered his services in arranging and supervising the collections to be

[1] A bust of Orme formed part of the bequest. This was identified a few years ago among the unnamed busts in the India Office Reading-Room; whereupon the then librarian (Mr. Tawney) promptly remarked: "I perceive we have here the Great Orme's Head!"


Admit the Bearer
Mr. Clatterbuck
and Party of Mrs Friends
on Monday Thursday or Saturday,
between the Hours of Ten and Three.
Dated 30th March 1835
Chas Mallows
To the Librarian of the Hon.ble the East India
Company's Library at their House in Leadenhall Street.

A TICKET FOR THE LIBRARY

formed ; but things were done at a leisurely pace in those days, and it was not until February 18, 1801, that Wilkins was actually appointed " Librarian to the Oriental Repository " at £200 per annum, a salary which was afterwards raised to £1000. At the end of the same year steps were taken to collect the books scattered through the different departments of the House and the Warehouses, together with any " articles of curiosity " to be found in the same quarters.

The Library thus started grew rapidly, partly through the liberality of the Directors, and partly owing to the donations made by members of the Company's services. Among the notable accessions were the collection of Sanskrit MSS. given by Henry Thomas Colebrooke ; the Leyden collection, purchased in 1824 ; the 1500 MSS. gathered by Colonel Colin Mackenzie during nearly forty years' work in India ; the Buchanan-Hamilton collection, which is largely geographical and statistical ; the Persian and Arabic books and MSS. obtained from Delhi after the Mutiny ; and many others of less bulk but of scarcely less importance. Reinforced, after its removal to the India Office, by important donations and purchases, the Library to-day stands unrivalled on its Oriental side, to say nothing of the fifty thousand or so books in European languages.

Only two men held the post of Librarian from the foundation of 1801 to the transfer to the Crown in 1858. Wilkins (who was knighted in 1833) retained his appointment until his death in 1836, at the age of about eighty-six. He was succeeded by Horace Hayman Wilson, Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, and author of the first Sanskrit-English Dictionary. Wilson not only saw the Company out, but lived to be for a year and a half Librarian to the Secretary of State for India in Council.

As we have seen, the Museum was at first part of the Library. But it gradually outgrew the accommodation thus available, and in time special rooms had to be set apart for the collection, which was largely increased by the incorporation of most of the objects exhibited in the Indian department of the Paris Exhibition of 1855. The contents of the Museum were of the most miscellaneous character: specimens of Indian products and manufactures; models of various kinds; paintings and miniatures; sculptures and reliefs; fossil remains; stuffed birds and animals; coins and medals; and flags and other trophies from Seringapatam. Two of the most popular exhibits were a Babylonian stone sent home in 1801 by Sir Harford Jones and the famous tiger of Tipu Sultan, representing the animal as tearing to pieces one of the Company's sepoys. The mechanism, when set in motion, produced sounds in imitation of the cries of the man and the growl of the tiger. This toy, which was found in Tipu's palace after the storming of Seringapatam, is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, the Indian section of which contains the bulk of the articles which were once in the Company's museum, these having been transferred from the India Office in 1880. At the same time many of the more strictly archæological or scientific exhibits were presented by the Secretary of State to Kew Gardens or the British Museum.

Among the objects which thus found their way to the national collection at Bloomsbury was a beautiful Roman tessellated pavement. This had been discovered in December, 1803, by some workmen engaged in digging up the road in Leadenhall Street, in order to trace an old sewer. It lay about 9½ feet below the surface in front of the easternmost columns of the East India House portico,

and had evidently formed the floor of an apartment more than 20 feet square. The sewer of which the workmen were in search had cut away more than a third of the pavement on the eastern side; but the central compartment, containing a figure of Bacchus reclining on the back of a tiger, remained almost entire, together with much of the ornamental bordering. The discovery aroused much interest, as the mosaic was one of the finest relics of Roman London that had come to light; and the Directors agreed to defray the cost of raising it, with a view to its being placed in the Company's museum. Owing to the thinness of the pavement, and perhaps to the primitive methods employed, it was badly broken in the process; but the central design and a portion of one of the borders were recovered in good condition. One of the East India House clerks, Thomas Fisher, whose literary and artistic activities have earned for him a place in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, made a drawing of the mosaic for exhibition at the Royal Academy in the spring of 1804, and later in the year published an account of the find, with a coloured engraving of his picture, made by James Basire; while a Mr. Lapidge issued a print of the same subject. The Court of Directors bought forty copies of each production.

Some sixty years later, when the East India House was demolished, several other Roman remains came to light. A further portion of the pavement already mentioned was recovered; and under the western wing of the Leadenhall Street frontage was found an entire room, built of Kentish rubble and chalk, with a pavement of red tesseræ. The walls had been plastered and coloured in fresco with lines; while there was evidence of an entrance passage. Mr. William Tite, in a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries in March, 1863, suggested that this

room, the floor of which was 19½ feet below the existing surface, was one of the ground-floor domestic offices of the villa containing the pavement previously discovered, and that the building stood on the side of the Roman way crossing the city from the south. The antiquities found on this occasion were presented to the British Museum.

This brings us to the story of the last days of the East India House. The Company had been founded under Queen Elizabeth; it had been remodelled under Queen Anne; and it was now to be destroyed under Queen Victoria. Its doom was pronounced in 1858, just two hundred and fifty years after its first ship reached the coast of India, and little more than a century after the battle of Plassey, which laid the foundation of its territorial power. That the vast empire which had grown up in the East should be administered by the British Government through a body which was nominally a commercial corporation, had long been an anachronism; and the Indian Mutiny gave the death-blow to the system. The powers and duties of the Company were transferred to a new Secretary of State, who was to be assisted by a Council somewhat analogous to the old Court of Directors, and partly recruited therefrom. The Company itself was not abolished—indeed, it could not be, for under the Act of 1833 the shareholders were guaranteed an annuity of £630,000 per annum for a minimum period of forty years—but it was reduced to a skeleton, viz. a chairman, five directors, a secretary, and a clerk, with offices first in Moorgate Street and then in Pancras Lane. In this state it continued until the time arrived when the right of redemption might be exercised. On May 15, 1873, an Act (36 Vict. cap. 17) was passed, which enabled the Secretary of State for India in Council to

give the stockholders the option of taking India stock in lieu of their holdings or of being paid off at the stipulated rate. At the same time it was enacted that on the completion of this operation the Company—now, as the Duke of Argyll said in the course of the debate, "a shadow of a shade"—should be dissolved. And dissolved it accordingly was on June 1, 1874.

Meanwhile Lord Stanley, the first Secretary of State for India, had taken possession of the Leadenhall Street premises at the beginning of September, 1858, and the East India House had become the India Office. This, however, was but a temporary arrangement, for it had been decided that the new department should have its headquarters at Westminster, near the Foreign Office, then about to be rebuilt. At the beginning of 1859 the task of designing both structures was entrusted to Mr. (afterwards Sir) Gilbert Scott. Into the well-known dispute over the style of the new offices, by which the work was much delayed, we need not enter; contenting ourselves with chronicling that it was not until the summer of 1867 that the Secretary of State for India was able to take possession of his present home.

By that date the East India House had been razed to the ground. Unable to wait for the completion of the new building, the Secretary of State had in the autumn of 1860 moved his office to temporary premises in what was afterwards the Westminster Palace Hotel. In the following year the old East India House and its site were put up to competition, and the tender of £155,000, made by a syndicate which included Mr. Thomas Brassey and Mr. (afterwards Sir) William Tite, the architect of the Royal Exchange, was accepted. The best of the furniture and fittings had been reserved for the new offices, but the

remainder was disposed of by public auction. After entering upon possession, the syndicate pulled down the House, and erected in lieu thereof a large building, intended to be let out in separate offices; and these premises are still standing.

XI

MR. AUDITOR HOOLE

IN point of literary excellence, "the great boast and ornament of the India House," Lamb tells us (he was writing in 1797), was Mr. John Hoole; and he adds that from his own experience he "found him more vapid than smallest small beer sun-vinegared." The criticism sounds harsh—Lamb was manifestly irritated by the recollection of Dr. Johnson's surmise that Fairfax's *Tasso* had been superseded by "the elegant translation of my friend, Mr. Hoole"—but it is substantially just. Later critics have sometimes varied, but never reversed the condemnation. Macaulay, looking round for a typical imitator of Pope's versification without Pope's genius, pitched upon Hoole, who, he said, "had learned how to manufacture decasyllable verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands, all as well turned, as smooth and as like each other as the blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's mill in the dockyard at Portsmouth." Scott and Southey were equally severe on Hoole's mechanical lines; and finally a critic of our own day (Sir Leslie Stephen in the *Dictionary of National Biography*) has declared that "only Johnson's praise . . . and the sale of several editions convince us that they were ever read."

But whatever the demerits of his poetry, Hoole is not without interest to the student of eighteenth-century

literature ; and a short notice of his life and work may the more readily be excused in that the sketch given in the *Dictionary of National Biography* is incomplete (and in some respects erroneous) as regards Hoole's official career at the East India House, while the need for brevity has compelled the omission from that account of several picturesque touches which may be gleaned from contemporary documents.

John Hoole was the son of a watchmaker living in Moorfields, and was born a few months after the accession of George II. He was educated at a school at Hoddesdon, in Hertfordshire ; and then, being pronounced too short-sighted for his father's business, a clerkship was obtained for him in the Accountant's Office at the East India House. This was on October 19, 1744, when he was not quite seventeen years of age. Of the next twelve or fifteen years of his life little is known, save that in 1757 he married a handsome Quakeress, named Susannah Smith, and that he supplemented his small salary by copying out invoices after hours and by translating French documents received from India. Apparently his taste for languages—he had already learned Italian for the pleasure of reading Tasso in the original—attracted the notice of an older official, Mr. George Oldmixon, who was also an Italian scholar ; and under his influence Hoole tried his hand at dramatic composition.

He had always had a bent for the theatre, a taste which was fostered by the fact that the elder Hoole was employed at Covent Garden as a machinist and his son had therefore the run of the place. Being an admirable mimic, he soon aspired to tread the boards himself ; and it is said that but for his father's opposition he would have tempted fortune as an actor instead of spending his days over the ledgers and

letters of the Honourable East India Company. On one occasion, indeed, he did make a public appearance on the stage, with a somewhat ludicrous result. It was at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the part he essayed was that of the Ghost in *Hamlet*. In the middle of his colloquy with the Prince of Denmark, he realized that he had forgotten the situation of the trap-door which was to take him back to sulphurous and tormenting flames. For the rest of the scene the poor Ghost, while stammering out his lines, was peering round the stage and feeling with furtive foot for the precious square, guided by the agonized whisper of the prompter, who had seen his predicament. Fortunately the quest was successful, and the Ghost was enabled to quit the scene with something of the traditional dignity; but the experience must have been a disquieting one, and henceforth Hoole confined his efforts to amateur theatricals in his father's house at Moorfields.

The drama with which he commenced his theatrical career was *Cyrus*, which was produced at Covent Garden Theatre with some success in December, 1768. To complete our brief account of his work in this direction we may note that another tragedy, *Timanthes*, founded (like *Cyrus*) on a play by Metastasio, was produced at the same theatre in 1770; and a third, *Cleonice*, five years later. The last-named, though it had the prestige of having been corrected by Dr. Johnson (who had "no doubt of its success"), proved a failure. Hoole's brother tells us that Mrs. Hartley played the principal part and "her beautiful figure, rather than her tragic powers, enabled the play to creep through the nine nights." The author felt the blow severely, and after this time was seldom seen at a theatre.

Hoole's friendship with Johnson was one of the most important features of his career. He is said to have been

introduced to the famous Doctor by Hawkesworth in 1761 ; but there was a still earlier tie, for Hoole's uncle and first teacher—an eccentric character known as "the metaphysical tailor"—had been one of Johnson's intimates in the dark days of his Grub Street life. The young aspirant had already at this time started upon the task of translating Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* ; and when it was published in 1763 Johnson supplied the dedication. The work seems to have had an extraordinary success, for no less than ten editions were issued up to 1821. Encouraged by the favour with which his venture had been received, Hoole set to work on other Italian writers. His translations of the dramas of Metastasio were issued in 1767, and in 1773 appeared his version of the first ten books of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, followed by a complete translation in 1783. This proved as popular as the author's *Tasso*.[1] Nine or ten editions were published, including one decorated with plates by Bartolozzi and other artists.

In all these ventures Hoole enjoyed the steady backing of the Great Cham of Literature. When *Ariosto* was being prepared, Johnson addressed a grandiloquent letter to Warren Hastings (with whom he had become acquainted a few years before), inviting his assistance. "It is a new thing," he wrote, "for a clerk of the India House to translate poets ; it is new for a Governor of Bengal to patronize learning."[2] The Doctor seems also to have spent many an evening at Hoole's house. Boswell records one occasion of this kind in 1776, when Mickle, the translator of Camoens' *Lusiad*, was present, and another in 1781, when Bourchier,

[1] It was the perusal of Hoole's translations of these two authors that fired the young Walter Scott with the ambition of mastering the Italian language.

[2] This letter is now in the British Museum (Addl. MS. 29,196, f. 4).

a former Governor of Madras, and Captain Orme, also an old Anglo-Indian, were of the party, and Johnson defended the Oriental system of caste, comparing it to the differences in the breeds of dogs, and concluding that " the Brahmins are the mastiffs of mankind." In April of the same year the Doctor carried Boswell to dine at the *Queen's Arms* in St. Paul's Churchyard, where Hoole had organized a City club for him at his express request. A letter written by Johnson to Hoole in September, 1784, makes a tender reference to their long friendship, and during the former's last illness none were more assiduous in attendance than Hoole, his wife, and his son, the Rev. Samuel, whose clerical ministrations were much appreciated by the dying man. Hoole himself wrote an account of the final phase, which was printed many years after in the *European Magazine* (September, 1799) and has been reproduced by Dr. Birkbeck Hill in his *Johnsonian Miscellanies*. To both father and son Johnson left books as mementoes; and the Rev. Samuel purchased as additional memorials the chair in which the Doctor usually sat, and the desk upon which much of the *Rambler* was written.

Something should now be said regarding Hoole's official career. After serving for a period of nineteen years in the Accountant's Office, in October, 1763, he was transferred to that of the Auditor, where he was under his friend Oldmixon. At midsummer, 1770, the latter was appointed to take charge of the correspondence with India, while Hoole succeeded him as " Auditor of Indian Accounts." Six years later Oldmixon retired, and Hoole was thereupon made " Writer and Compiler of Indian Correspondence." This post was abolished from September 25, 1782, the new appointment of " Clerk to the Committee for Government Troops and Stores " being allotted to Hoole instead,

at the same salary as before (£500). He held this post until his retirement, which took place at Christmas, 1785, on a pension of £300 per annum.

The initial years, as also the concluding period, of his service were probably calm enough ; but the six years of his employment as Auditor were full of trouble, both physical and mental. Soon after his appointment he fell down a flight of steps one evening and broke his knee-cap, with the result that, even when he could leave his room, he had to be carried to and from the East India House by a brace of chairmen. Then came two Parliamentary Committees, delving busily into the affairs of the Company, and calling incessantly for returns and papers on this and that subject. The main brunt fell upon Hoole's department, and he was so worried that be became ill ; but he was pursued even to his sick chamber by demands for information and suggestions. Many of the figures given in the 1772 and 1773 reports of the Committee of Secrecy were furnished by Hoole ; and these returns (with a few related papers) were printed separately by order of the Court of Directors in 1772, with his name on the title-page. A further trial for the unlucky Auditor was his examination at the Bar of the House—an ordeal shared by two brother officials, viz. Samuel Wilks, the Examiner of Indian Records, and Samuel Johnson, of the Secretary's Office. All three were spectacled, and, as they stood together at the Bar, a waggish Member whispered to a Director an inquiry whether all the Company's servants were fitted with glasses.

Just before his retirement Hoole published a volume of critical essays by his friend John Scott, the Quaker poet of Amwell, adding a biographical sketch from his own pen ; and during the next few years his literary activity showed no sign of abating. In 1791 he produced an abridged

version of his *Orlando* (for those who could not stand more than twenty-four books of one poem), and in the following year a translation of Tasso's *Rinaldo*. At the commencement of the new century he issued another edition of Metastasio's dramas and poems, in three volumes, containing a quantity of fresh matter. This seems to have been his last work.

Of his movements after his retirement we have but slight indications. In April, 1786, he quitted London for Abinger, in Surrey, where his son Samuel (who is said to have been born in a hackney coach which was carrying Mrs. Hoole to the first night of her husband's *Timanthes*) had accepted a curacy. Probably he visited London from time to time, for Horace Walpole, writing from Berkeley Square in April, 1795, mentions that he and Hoole—" so admirable a poet himself, and such a critic in Italian "—had been hammering together at a stanza of Lorenzo de Medici's, without being able to satisfy themselves with their translation. From Abinger, in 1796, he moved to Brighton, and thence to Tenterden, in Kent. After that, except for the publication of Metastasio already mentioned, we hear nothing more of him until the newspapers announced his death on August 2, 1803, while visiting friends at Dorking. He was buried in the parish church of that town.

In the same year the Rev. Samuel Hoole—who was also a poet in a small way—was appointed by the East India Company to be the Chaplain of their Hospital at Poplar, a post which he held for twenty years, and then resigned on being made the first rector of the new parish of Poplar. His mother, who accompanied him to the East End, died during his tenure of the former post, and in what was once the Hospital Chapel, but is now known as the Church of St. Matthias, may still be seen a monument to her memory,

which proudly recalls that she was the wife of one "known in the literary circle as the translator of *Tasso* and *Ariosto*."

In person, we are told by his brother, Hoole was of middling stature, and of athletic make, possessed of a fine constitution and a good appetite. The accident already mentioned threatened to make him permanently lame; but he subsequently broke the same knee-cap again, which resulted in his gaining an increased freedom of motion, while a third repetition of the accident is said to have restored his powers of walking almost entirely. Lady Louisa Stuart, who met him about the time of his retirement, describes him thus: "He was a clerk in the India House, a man of business of that ancient breed, now extinct, which used to be as much marked by plaited cambric ruffles, a neat wig, a snuff-coloured suit of clothes, and a corresponding sobriety of look, as one race of spaniels is by the black nose and silky hair. 'When I have been long otherwise employed, and out of the habit of writing verse,' said he, 'I find it rather difficult, and get on slowly; but after a little practice I fall into the track again; then I can easily make a hundred lines in a day.'" To this somewhat depreciatory account, let us add the testimony of one who knew him better than her ladyship: "He was gentle, unassuming and affectionate; perhaps no man, in the circle where he was known, was ever more respected and beloved."

Probably the best portrait of Hoole is that drawn from life by George Dance, R.A., engraved by William Daniell, A.R.A., and published by the former, with other similar sketches, in 1808–14. The original drawing is now in the National Portrait Gallery. Another likeness, showing him wearing a large pair of spectacles, was prefixed to his *Rinaldo*, and a similar portrait was engraved by the same

JOHN HOOLE

artist (Anker Smith) for the *European Magazine* of March, 1792. A pencil drawing by Ozias Humphry, showing Hoole seated in a chair and reading a book, was sold at Sotheby's in June, 1920.

Before quitting the subject, a word or two should be said about a building which, until a few years ago, was still standing to link Hoole and his contemporaries with the present generation. This was the house which (divided into two separate dwellings) formed Nos. 55 and 56 Great Queen Street, on the eastern side of New Yard. It was one of the handsomest remains of seventeenth-century London left to us, and was attributed to Inigo Jones, or his pupil, John Webb. Originally there were several other houses of the same type on the eastern side, but at some period subsequent to 1850 the rest were taken down. The list of its distinguished inhabitants is a remarkable one. Sir Godfrey Kneller was there in 1719, and later on another painter, Thomas Hudson, rented the house. He is said to have been living there when Reynolds was his pupil (1741–43). Worlidge, an etcher of some repute, died in this house in 1766; and some years later his widow let it to "Perdita" Robinson, the unfortunate favourite of George IV. Sheridan was the next tenant of note (1779), and it is asserted that *The School for Scandal* was penned within its walls. Hoole succeeded him, but at what date is uncertain. Probably by this time the mansion had been divided, and Hoole's dwelling was that now known as No. 56. Part of the time, apparently, Miss Reynolds, sister of Sir Joshua, shared the house with him. Upon Hoole's quitting London, James Boswell became its occupier, for Mickle, writing in May, 1786, says that the latter "has the house of his friend Hoole"; and, appropriately enough, part of Boswell's immortal *Life of Dr. Johnson* was here

written. He did not remain long, for in 1788 another tenant's name appears in the rate books. A memorial tablet, commemorating Boswell's occupation of the building, was affixed to the front by the London County Council in September, 1905. The house was subsequently acquired by the Freemasons, for the purpose of extending their Hall, and in spite of an influential protest it was demolished.

HOOLE'S HOUSE

XII

THE ROYAL EAST INDIA VOLUNTEERS

"UNDER arms, Lord love thee! . . . I called to consult my lawyer; he was clothed in a dragoon's dress, belted and casqued, and about to mount a charger, which his writing-clerk (habited as a sharp-shooter) walked to and fro before his door. I went to scold my agent for having sent me to advise with a madman; he had stuck into his head the plume which in more sober days he wielded between his fingers, and figured as an artillery officer. My mercer had his spontoon in his hand, as if he measured his cloth by that implement instead of a legitimate yard. The banker's clerk, who was directed to sum my cash account, blundered it three times, being disordered by the recollection of his military tellings-off at the morning drill. . . . I had recourse to a physician, but he also was practising a more wholesale mode of slaughter than that which his profession had been supposed at all times to open to him." This quotation—need we say that it is from *The Antiquary*?—has of course an element of humorous exaggeration; but it gives a not inapt idea of the warlike spirit with which the civilian population of Great Britain met the threats of French invasion in the last decade of the eighteenth and the opening years of the nineteenth century. Young and old, rich and poor, pressed eagerly into the ranks of the volunteer army—even the most peaceful of men putting

on for a time the panoply of war. At Deal the visitor might see the long, lean figure of William Pitt drilling the Cinque Ports Corps; away in far Warwickshire the aged Warren Hastings rode over day by day to watch the evolutions of the village warriors; in London a young Scotsman named James Mill spent more than twenty of his scanty stock of guineas in providing his equipment; and even so gentle a character as Leigh Hunt enlisted in the regiment of St. James's, of whose parade in the courtyard of Burlington House he has given a most entertaining account in his *Autobiography*. Those who were too weak or too old to join the new force gave money to assist in providing arms and uniforms; and many public and private bodies made most liberal donations for the same objects. In all, nearly eighty regiments of infantry, and nine of cavalry, were raised and equipped in London and its suburbs alone.

The East India Company was not slow to join in the national movement.[1] Quite apart from patriotic motives, it was difficult for the directors to contemplate with equanimity the possibility of London being denuded of soldiers, in the event of invasion, and their warehouses being thus left to the mercy of a mob. On August 24, 1796, therefore, the Court approved a plan for raising two regiments

[1] This was not the first occasion on which the Company had manifested its loyalty in this manner. In the summer of 1690, a French invasion being threatened at a moment when King William had taken all his available troops to Ireland, the Company resolved to raise a troop of fifty horse at its own expense. Lord Chandos, one of the "Committees," was appointed to the command by the Queen; but before the troop was fully enlisted news came of the flight of King James and the impending return of his victorious rival; whereupon the project was with the consent of the Government abandoned. Of course in this case the men employed were not in the service of the Company, and the latter in effect merely relieved the Government of the cost of the equipment of the detachment.

of volunteers, each to consist of 500 rank and file, 20 drummers, 30 sergeants, and about 35 superior officers. The field officers were to be selected from the ranks of the directors; the commissioned officers from the East India House staff; and the non-commissioned and privates from the labourers and others employed in the Company's warehouses. The force was to be armed by the Government and clothed by the Company; no pay was to be given, except to the lower ranks, and then only in the event of their being called out for duty, when they were to receive an extra shilling a day. A fortnight later the list of officers was approved, with the Chairman (David Scott) as the colonel of the first regiment and the Deputy (Hugh Inglis) as the colonel of the second. Evidently there had been a rush of volunteers for the other posts, for a project was mooted of forming the unsuccessful candidates into an independent company of cadets. A handsome uniform was provided, consisting of a scarlet coat turned up with blue, buff waistcoat and breeches, and a large busby ornamented with a plume. That no money was spared is shown by the fact that by Christmas, 1797, over £20,000 had been spent on the corps. Authority to charge the cost of the force against the Company's funds had been given by an Act of Parliament passed on June 6, 1797 (37 Geo. III, c. 74).

By the terms of enlistment, the members of the two regiments were not to be required to serve outside London or its environs; but in April, 1798, they volunteered "to march, under the command of their own officers, wherever it may be deemed necessary for the safety of His Majesty's person and the defence of the country"; and a month later this offer was accepted by the Government. To take their place, should they be called upon to quit the capital,

it was decided to arm and drill a further number of the men of the Company's warehouses. Thus was formed the Third Regiment of East India Volunteers, with Mr. John Roberts (a former Chairman) as commandant. About the same time the whole corps received the title of Royal East India Volunteers. A body of volunteer artillery seems to have been added before long, but the actual date of its formation has not been discovered.

A couple of water-colour drawings by Henry Matthews, relating to these regiments, still hang in the Military Committee-room at the India Office.[1] One of these depicts the presentation of colours to the Second Regiment on July 27, 1797—a ceremony thus described in the *Morning Chronicle* of the following day: "Yesterday noon the Second Regiment of East India Volunteers were reviewed in Lord's Cricket Ground, under the command of Captain English [? Colonel Inglis], to receive their colours from the fair hand of Lady Jane Dundas. A suitable exhortation was delivered by the Chaplain of the Regiment; and after the ceremony the officers adjourned to the London Tavern to partake of an elegant entertainment provided by their Colonel, at which were present, with the India Directors, the Earl of Mornington, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Anstruther, and a number of other noblemen." Lady Jane, by the way, was the wife of Henry Dundas, the President of the India Board, who later on became Colonel-in-Chief of the Brigade of Royal East India Volunteers. The other (here reproduced) represents a similar ceremony in connexion with the Third Regiment. The *Morning Chronicle* of Monday, July 1, 1799, states that "the Third

[1] Reproductions of these will be found in *Relics of the Honourable East India Company*, by Sir George Birdwood and William Foster. Matthews, by the way, became in 1801 a member of the Company's establishment.

A PRESENTATION OF COLOURS

Regiment of Royal East India Volunteers received their colours on Saturday last from the hand of Lady Jane Dundas, in Lord's Cricket Ground. The day being very favourable, a number of ladies and gentlemen of distinction were in the ground, who partook of an elegant entertainment prepared by order of the East India Military Committee. It is but justice to observe that this regiment is in no respect inferior in point of appearance and discipline to the first and second. At one o'clock the men marched back and were sumptuously regaled in their drill-room in Bishopsgate Street. The three regiments of Royal East India Volunteers comprise one thousand five hundred men."

In connexion with the second of these drawings an amusing story is told. One of the officers was of aldermanic corpulence (possibly owing to the prevalence of "elegant entertainments"), and he was extremely disgusted to find that the artist had done full justice to his amplitude of waist, giving him (he complained) an utterly unmilitary appearance. His protests were so vehement that Mr. Matthews undertook to put matters right by exaggerating the size of the chaplain's sleeves, which was accordingly done. How seriously the volunteers took themselves is shown also by the dying request of one of them—a young ensign—that he might be buried in his regimentals, with military honours. Lamb wrote some rather poor verses on the episode, a copy of which he enclosed in one of his letters to Southey.

On June 21, 1799, King George, attended by his sons and a brilliant retinue, rode round the City and Southwark inspecting different corps of volunteers, aggregating over 12,000. Among these were 500 of the East India Company's men, drawn up at the East India House. On the same

day the Commander-in-Chief issued an order expressing His Majesty's satisfaction.

In two years more the war-cloud lifted and the long-desired peace came in sight. A preliminary treaty was signed in October, 1801, amid general rejoicings. Preparations were now made for disbanding the volunteer regiments so soon as the definitive treaty should be concluded. This event did not take place until March 27, 1802, and a few weeks later the House of Commons, following His Majesty's example, formally thanked the members of the various corps for their patriotic services. The Court of Directors in like manner expressed their satisfaction with the conduct of both officers and men of their particular brigade; but, foreseeing that the peace would be nothing more than a temporary truce, they decided merely to reduce the force, not to abolish it. The artillery corps was, it is true, disbanded; but the three regiments of infantry were to be continued, with an establishment of 400 men each, at a cost not exceeding £5000 per annum. About the same time, Mr. David Scott, owing to ill-health, resigned his command of the First Regiment, his place being taken by Sir Lionel Darell. On the death of the latter in the following year, the colonelcy was transferred to Mr. Charles Mills.

The *Times* for August 16, 1802, contains the following paragraph, which shows that the training of the brigade was still being carried on with vigour: "Yesterday the Third Regiment of Royal East India Volunteers practised firing with ball at Highgate. A figure of Bonaparte, admirably painted by Captain Barnard, was placed opposite to the Grenadier Company, and hardly a part of the hero escaped without 'a palpable hit.'"

War broke out again in May, 1803, and in the following

month the artillery company was re-established and the three regiments of infantry were brought up to their former strength. In the general enthusiasm for home defence, the number of volunteers throughout the kingdom rose to more than 300,000 men ; while the return to power of William Pitt assured the country that the weapon thus put into the hands of the Government would be wisely and efficiently directed. It would be tedious to trace in detail the history of the brigade during the next few years ; but we may note that in August, 1805, while Napoleon was waiting at Boulogne for Villeneuve's fleet to cover his descent on the English coast, the Second Regiment garrisoned Maidstone, in order to set free an equivalent body of regular troops ; and it was decided that the other two regiments should be lent to the Government in turn for limited periods, with a view to their employment in a similar manner.

The *Globe* of August 3, 1812, mentions that the three regiments of East India Volunteers were reviewed by the Duke of Cambridge in what is now known as Wanstead Park, and that after the ceremony Mr. and Mrs. Tylney Long Wellesley " gave a magnificent entertainment at their princely château at Wanstead." This is particularly interesting when we remember that the hostess was the representative of the family founded by Sir Josia Child, the well-known Governor of the Company in the time of Charles II, while her husband was a near relative of the Duke of Wellington and Marquess Wellesley.

According to Hughson (*Walks through London*, 1817, p. 44), the headquarters of the corps were the Company's warehouses in New Street, Bishopsgate. " From there," he says, " during the late war, three regiments of armed men, composed of servants, etc., were in the habit of

issuing out two or three times a week to be trained and exercised in a field belonging to the East India Company near the City Road." A "London Volunteer of 1803," in his *Reminiscences*, is more specific as to the latter locality: "The East India Company's three regiments (the best soldiers next to the Foot Guards) drilled in a field which lay in the way on the one side to the Rosemary Branch . . . and the White Lead Mills, on the other side skirted the once pleasant path leading from the *Shepherd and Shepherdess* across the meadow either to Queen's Head Lane, the *Britannia*, or the Almshouses near the *Barley Mow*, Islington." A further reference occurs in a letter from Thomas Rumney, dated August 8, 1797: "The East India Company have trained their warehousemen behind the *Shepherd and Shepherdess*, and I assure you they have all the appearance of regular troops, and perform their exercise exceedingly well" (*From the Old South-Sea House*, p. 220).

The brigade continued embodied all through the Peninsula War and until the meeting of the Congress of Vienna (September, 1814). Then, as peace seemed firmly established, and the expense of the corps (which had lately averaged over £20,000 a year) was burdensome, it was decided to disband it. Small gratuities were given to the non-commissioned officers and men; while the brigade-major and each of the adjutants received a hundred guineas for the purchase of a piece of plate. At the same time the Prince Regent formally thanked the officers and men for their public-spirited services.

The Company was not left long without a volunteer force. In March, 1820, owing possibly to the alarm created by the Cato Street conspiracy, the General Court sanctioned a proposal made by the directors to tender to

AN OFFICER SALUTING

THE UNIFORM OF THE R.E.I. VOLUNTEERS

the new sovereign the services of a regiment, 800 strong, to be recruited from among their employés. The offer was accepted, and, as an Act of Parliament was necessary to enable the Company to incur this expense, a short bill was introduced and passed in the following July. This regiment was designated, like its predecessors, the Royal East India Volunteers; the same uniform was sanctioned, and royal commissions were issued to its officers. Mr. William Astell, M.P., a former Chairman, became its colonel, with a future Chairman, Mr. William Wigram, M.P., as lieutenant-colonel.

This corps remained in being until March, 1834, when with the King's permission it was disbanded; this being one of the economies forced upon the Company by its being deprived of the exclusive trade with China. The regiment was thanked by Government for its services, and the officers were permitted to retain their rank. Colonel Astell, by the way, commanded all through the existence of the corps.

The regimental colours, consisting of (1) a Union Jack with the royal monogram under a crown in the centre, and (2) an ensign with a Jack in the corner and bearing on one side the Company's arms, on the other the words "Royal East India Volunteers," were deposited in the library of the East India House, where there was already a great display of flags of various kinds. In 1836, however, it was resolved to transfer the bulk of the collection to Chelsea Hospital, where it may still be seen. The Volunteer colours were not included in those handed over; but they were taken down and deposited in some place of security —probably the Military Store Office. Thence, years afterwards, they found their way to the India Store Depot at Lambeth, where they remained until Sir George

Birdwood's attention was drawn to them. At his suggestion they were hung in the Military Committee Room at the India Office, and there they still remain —a mute memorial of the patriotic zeal of the servants of John Company.

XIII

MR. LAMB, OF THE ACCOUNTANT'S OFFICE

EVERY one knows that the author of the *Essays of Elia* was for the greater part of his life a clerk in the service of the Honourable East India Company. Many references to his employment, some clear and unmistakable, others naturally or wilfully obscure, are found in his writings, especially in the numerous letters which have been collected with such painstaking zeal by his various editors. The friends he made in the office: the work, and the discontent which from time to time it inspired: the changes introduced (to his great annoyance) by reforming zeal: these and many kindred topics are mentioned either openly or under some thin disguise. Several of the most charming of his letters are based upon incidents of office life, or addressed to his colleagues there; and one of the best known of his essays—that on *The Superannuated Man*—deals directly with his retirement from the East India House.

This being so, it is our bounden duty, in a work like the present, to devote a few pages to the official career of so well-known a member of the establishment. And this we may the more willingly attempt, in that the details to be gleaned from his pages throw a good deal of light upon the everyday working of the office.

The story begins naturally with Lamb's appointment to the Accounts Department of the East India House in

April, 1792, when he was a little over seventeen years of age. He had left Christ's Hospital about two years before, and had spent the intervening period, partly in the counting-house of Joseph Paice (who will need no introduction to the readers of *Elia*) and partly in the office of the Honourable South Sea Company, where his experiences provided materials for another famous essay. This latter post had been obtained for him by Mr. Paice, and there is reason to believe that he owed his clerkship at the East India House to the same kind patron, whose friend, Sir Francis Baring, was Deputy-Chairman of the Company in 1791–92 and Chairman in 1792–93. Lamb's formal petition to the Company for employment has not been preserved; but we know from other documents of the like nature that in it he would probably assure "Your Honours" that he had been "educated in writing and accounts" and would promise to behave "with the greatest diligence and fidelity." With it he would submit a certificate from his late schoolmaster regarding his attainments and character. Almost invariably these testimonials declared the disposition of the candidate to be "mild and docile," as though ferocity in a subordinate was the one thing dreaded by the Directors. On the point of intellectual qualification, the wording would vary with the facts of the case and the elasticity of the deponent's conscience. In the case of some of the nominees, the strain in the latter respect must have been severe. It is amusing to note that in one case the teacher could say no more than that it was his *belief* that the applicant understood the *theory* of book-keeping *with some degree of accuracy*.

Lamb's petition, accompanied by three others, came before the Court of Directors on April 4, 1792; and, having been reported upon favourably by the Committee

of Accounts, was granted on the following day. The next step was to provide security for good behaviour. All the Company's servants were subjected to this requirement; but those of certain departments, of which the Accountant's was one, had to give security for a larger amount than their fellows. Thus Lamb had himself to enter into a bond of £500, and to provide two other sureties for a similar amount each. His first guarantors were his father, John Lamb, and Peter Pierson, of whom we catch a glimpse in the essay on *The Old Benchers*. When Pierson died, his place was taken by "Jem" White, Lamb's schoolfellow and the founder of the feast described in *The Praise of Chimney Sweepers*. The death of White in March, 1820, necessitated the execution of fresh bonds, and Martin Burney, another name familiar to Elia's readers, joined in the guarantee with Charles's brother John. In November of the following year John Lamb died, and the formality was gone through afresh, with Dr. Stoddart as Burney's companion.

In April, 1792, then, we find Lamb installed at a desk in the building which was to become so familiar to him.[1] Judged by the standard of the present day, he was by no means an ideal occupant of such a post; and, had success in a competitive examination been a necessary preliminary, it is to be feared that he would have been among the rejected. His training at Christ's Hospital, though excellent as a preparation for a university career, had given

[1] It is said that after Lamb's death the pertinacious anxiety of his admirers to view the very desk at which he had worked led the India House messengers to fix upon one which stood in a neighbouring lobby and could be exhibited without disturbing the clerical staff. Here the visitor would enjoy the satisfaction of sitting upon "Lamb's stool," while he chaffered for one of two quills used by the great man, which the messenger (strangely enough) always happened to have on hand.

him few qualifications for commercial life. His ignorance of geography, then and always, he frankly confesses in his letters; Ethiopia he imagined to be contiguous to Independent Tartary (Prester John being no doubt the connecting link in his mind); and his knowledge of other regions was equally vague. In spite of Manning's friendly endeavours, he could never acquire even the rudiments of mathematics; while, as regards arithmetic in particular, we know from Leigh Hunt that a boy in the Grammar School at the Hospital might reach the age of fifteen without being taught the multiplication table. As late as 1823 Lamb writes: "I think I lose £100 a year owing solely to my want of neatness in making up accounts; how I puzzle 'em out at last is the wonder! I have to do with millions!!" [1] Although in later years he wrote a neat and clear hand, this, according to Talfourd, was acquired at the India House, "where he also learned to flourish—a facility he took a pride in, and sometimes indulged." Given, however, ability and diligence, these initial difficulties were not insurmountable; and there are no grounds for thinking that Lamb was much behind his fellow-clerks in the satisfactory discharge of his daily duties, though the contrary view has sometimes been taken, probably owing to the well-known story of his apologizing for his habitually late arrivals by representing that he made up for them by correspondingly early departures.

[1] In an article in *Scribner's Magazine* for March, 1876, some depreciatory remarks on this head are recorded as having been made by one of Lamb's colleagues, named Ogilvie. "He was neither a neat nor an accurate accountant: he made frequent errors, which he was in the habit of wiping out with his little finger." It is added that he "very often came late, and generally stood around and talked a good deal." Ogilvie bore witness to Lamb's great popularity in the office.

Of Lamb's first few years in Leadenhall Street we have no record; but it is to be feared that they were scarcely times of pleasantness. His daily task may well have been irksome to his unaccustomed shoulders; while as yet he had no special friends, such as he found at a later period, among his fellow-clerks. Above all, he was weighed down, mentally and physically, by the poverty of his home life and the ill-health of his parents, both sinking into senility. This poverty he could do little to relieve. In those days a clerk at the East India House received no regular salary for his first three years of service—that period counting, apparently, as a time of apprenticeship, during which the novice was learning his duties. It is true that his services were not left entirely unremunerated. A sum of £30 was paid annually under the name of "gratuity," and no doubt more could be earned by extra work. But in any case Lamb's income was small at this period, and his consequent struggles must have deepened the gloom which, even before the tragedy of his mother's death, hung over the family in Little Queen Street, Holborn.

As the subject of Lamb's salary has been touched upon, it may be well to mention here what little need be said upon this point. In April, 1795, his three years of probation having expired, he was assigned the modest salary of £40 per annum. A year later, this was made up to £70, and in another twelvemonth to £80. Thenceforward, until 1814, he received an increment of £10 every second year. From the beginning of the century, moreover, he was in receipt of a substantial yearly gratuity, commencing at £30 and amounting by 1814 to £80. In 1815 a reorganization took place. The Directors were setting their house in order after the upset produced by the withdrawal

of the greater part of their trading privileges ; and among other grievances brought to their notice was the inequality of the salaries paid in different departments. It should be explained that at this date the practice was in vogue of levying fees upon the various transactions that passed between the staff and the outside public, and these fees were divided among the clerks concerned in certain proportions. A system was now established by which all such sums were paid into a general fund and distributed in a more equitable manner ; many indirect sources of emolument were stopped ; and salaries were revised upon the basis of length of service. The change appears to have been advantageous to Lamb, for shortly afterwards his salary is given as £480. From this it rose gradually to £700 by 1821, remaining at that figure till just before his retirement, when it was made £730. Besides this regular remuneration, it is certain that, especially in the early years of his service, money was to be earned in several other ways. Extra work in the evening, of which we know Lamb had his share, was a fairly constant source of income ; there was an allowance of £10 each year for holidays (a privilege withdrawn, except in the case of existent holders, in 1817) ; and doubtless there were other emoluments which are not now traceable. On the whole, then, Lamb's post was in respect of salary a comfortable one ; and many of his literary friends must have envied him the secure income which, at a daily cost of six hours' labour, was poured regularly into his pocket.

In the early part of Lamb's career he had, like other undistinguished items, to work hard and at times late. "I am starving at the India House," he writes in 1796, "near seven o'clock without my dinner ; and so it has been, and will be, almost all the week. I get home at

THE EAST INDIA HOUSE IN 1800

night o'erwearied, quite faint." In such circumstances the annual holiday was looked forward to with actual physical craving; and great was Lamb's disappointment when, in the summer of that year, the "execrable aristocrat and knave, Richardson" (the Accountant-General), refused him leave for an intended visit to Coleridge, on the ground of the number of clerks absent at the time. This seems, however, to have been the only disappointment of the kind, and in later years Lamb was always able to count upon a month's absence from "the foggy, candle-light den" in Leadenhall Street, to be spent, as fancy willed, at Hastings, Oxford, Tonbridge, or (on one occasion) in a pleasant jaunt as far as Paris.

For some years after this date, the chronicle of Lamb's official career is uneventful. With increased length of service and rising emoluments came naturally additional responsibility, and at times much extra work. In the early part of 1815 Crabb Robinson found him almost distracted with business worries and his sister's illness; while in April of that year he himself thus describes to Wordsworth the harassing calls made upon him: "On Friday I was at office from ten in the morning (two hours dinner except) to eleven at night—last night till nine; my business, and office business in general, has increased so. I don't mean I am there every night; but I must expect a great deal of it. I never leave till four, and do not keep a holyday now once in ten times, where I used to keep all red-letter days and some fine days besides, which I used to dub Nature's holydays." This pressure stirred him into something like revolt, and in the following August he writes: "My remonstrances have stirred up others to remonstrate; and altogether there is a plan for separating certain parts of business from our department, which, if

it take place, will produce me more time, *i.e.* my evenings free. It may be a means of placing me in a more conspicuous situation, which will knock at my nerves another way, but I wait the issue in submission." Evidently a change for the better now took place, for complaints of overwork do not recur again until some years later. In 1822 he even boasts that he could do his whole day's work in two hours.

The nature of the work which thus harassed him is clear from the references in his letters. At the period of Lamb's service the Company was still a vast trading concern. Tea and indigo, drugs and piece-goods, poured in a great stream into its warehouses, and were disposed of periodically at the auctions held in the Sale Room of the East India House. The accounts relating to this multifarious business passed through the department of which Lamb was a member. Hence his references to auditing warehousekeepers' accounts: to "doing" the deposits on cotton wool; to making out warrants; to the "indigo appendix"; and to a tea sale which he had just attended, in which the entry of notes, deposits, etc., had fallen, as usual, mostly to his share.

Of Lamb in his official capacity we obtain a glimpse from the *London Reminiscences* of De Quincey, who describes at considerable length his experiences in calling at the East India House (some time in the winter of 1804–5) to present a letter of introduction to Lamb. With no small amount of difficulty he discovered the proper room, which was a large one with "a very lofty writing-desk, separated by a still higher railing from that part of the floor on which the profane—the laity, like myself—were allowed to approach the *clerus*, or clerkly rulers of the room. Within the railing sat, to the best of my remembrance, six quill-driving

gentlemen . . . all too profoundly immersed in their oriental studies to have any sense of my presence. Consequently I was reduced to a necessity of announcing myself and my errand. I walked, therefore, into one of the two open doorways of the railing, and stood closely by the high stool of him who occupied the first place within the little aisle. I touched his arm, by way of recalling him from his lofty Leadenhall speculations to this sublunary world; and, presenting my letter, asked if that gentleman (pointing to the address) were really a citizen of the present room; for I had been repeatedly misled, by the directions given me, into wrong rooms. The gentleman smiled; it was a smile not to be forgotten. This was Lamb!" And De Quincey goes on to narrate with what courtesy and geniality Lamb climbed down from his high perch to welcome his friend's friend and extend to him a cordial invitation to spend an evening in the Temple.

Allusion has already been made to the reforms of 1815. Two years later (May 14, 1817) the pruning-knife was again at work, though this time it was applied, not to salaries, but to certain special allowances and to the holidays enjoyed by the clerks. For the future, it was ordained that holidays on saints' days were to cease and only Christmas Day, Good Friday, and certain fast or thanksgiving days were to be observed. The change annoyed Lamb. "The Committee," he writes to Chambers, "have formally abolished all holydays whatsoever, for which may the Devil, who keeps no holydays, have them in his eternal burning workshop." "I have but one holiday," he grumbles to Coleridge at the end of 1818, "which is Christmas Day itself nakedly: no pretty garnish and fringes of St. John's Day, Holy Innocents, etc., that used to bestud it all around in the calendar"; and earlier in the same

year he accuses the hard-hearted Committee of having "abridged us of the immemorially-observed custom of going at one o'clock of a Saturday—the little shadow of a holiday left us."

Another privilege which was withdrawn at the same period was that of sending and receiving letters post-free. It was no doubt this advantage which had led Lamb to conduct most of his private correspondence at the East India House. "I have a habit," he explains in 1822, "of never writing letters but at the office; 'tis so much time cribbed out of the Company." And for these epistles, Mr. Carew Hazlitt tells us, as well as for many of his other writings, he used to a large extent waste fly-sheets and soiled office paper; thus utilizing, for his inimitable productions, what in the essay on *Oxford in the Vacation* he styles the "very parings of a counting-house." The liberality of John Company in paying the postage on private letters addressed to the staff was used by Lamb—and no doubt by others—to cover the correspondence of friends as well. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth had letters addressed to their friend at the East India House, the distinguishing mark being that a superfluous "e" was added to Lamb's name. However, in October, 1817, an edict of the Directors' swept away this privilege, and Lamb had to warn his friends not to send letters through him for the future. "Henceforth I write up No Thoroughfare."

But, although he might grumble at changes that displeased him, Lamb did not fail to recognize that his situation at the East India House supplied many reasons for contentment. His salary was by this time amply sufficient, and there was no longer any need for those petty economies to which he refers, half regretfully, in the essay on *Old*

China; while, among other advantages, probably not the least was the benefit to his health resulting from regular employment during the principal part of the day in mild and unexciting desk-work. When, therefore, his friend Bernard Barton, the poetical Quaker, proposed to give up his bank-clerkship and depend upon literature for a livelihood, Lamb remonstrated vehemently. "Trust not the public," he wrote; "I bless every star that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me down upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. . . . Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment; look upon them but as lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome, dead timber of a desk that makes me live! A little grumbling is a wholesome medicine for the spleen; but in my inner heart do I approve and embrace this our close but unharassing way of life."

His appreciation of his official position was not entirely due to mercenary considerations. Even for the building itself he had grown to entertain an affectionate regard, though that "stately house of merchants" appeared at times but "a dreary pile . . . with its labyrinthine passages and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one-half the year supplied the place of the sun's light." Among the clerks, too, Lamb made many friends. The names of Chambers, Dodwell, Plumley, Evans (to mention a few) occur often in his letters, as also those of Bye (who wrote sonnets "most like . . . what we might have supposed Petrarch would have written, if Petrarch had been born a fool") and James Brook Pulham, to whom we owe the likeness of Lamb to be mentioned presently. Some of the allusions to his colleagues are now unintelligible. Who "Grinwallows" was, whose appointment as "master of

the ceremonies at Dandelion" Lamb announced to Chambers,[1] cannot now be discovered; while a note to Dodwell in October, 1827, bristles with initials and dashes which refuse to yield their meaning. In other cases the riddle is not so hard to read. "Does Master Hannah give macaroons still?" he queries in July, 1815. This doubtless refers to some liberality on the part of Mr. Hennah (as the name should be written) in respect of biscuits for consumption with the cup of tea which was always at the call of the clerks; while possibly beneath the feminine turn given to the name smoulders some ancient office joke.

Of Lamb's popularity at the East India House there is no lack of evidence. "They all called him Charley," said an old colleague many years later; and how warmly he reciprocated their regard is amply shown in his letters. When his unlucky farce was produced at Drury Lane, a number of his fellow-clerks attended, and vied in their applause with the contingent brought by John Lamb from the South Sea House. To Lamb's delight in the annual office feast reference has been made in an earlier chapter. It may have been at one of these gatherings that Lamb—according to a story related by Mr. Lucas—sat opposite to Thomas Love Peacock, and, on the latter asking him what sort of an egg that was in front of him, replied: "The kind of an egg that a drunken peacock would lay."

[1] There is in the same letter an amusing instance of Lamb's deliberate mystification of his correspondents. He gravely informs Chambers of the marriage of their colleague Friend (afterwards the first Accountant-General under the Secretary of State), adding several details—that "he has married a Roman Catholic, which has offended his family," and so forth. As a matter of fact, Mr. Friend did not marry until thirteen or fourteen years later. This prevarication lends a special piquancy to Lamb's succeeding statement that, if he is "singular in anything it is in too great a squeamishness to anything that remotely looks like a falsehood."

There are, of course, numerous anecdotes bearing on Lamb's office life; but they are so well known that I will content myself with a reference to two—both of them handed down by tradition to the members of the present India Office. The first has been several times related, but not in the form in which it was passed on to me by one who had actually served in the old House. It is to the effect that one day, while passing through Leadenhall Market, Lamb accidentally trod on the foot of a butcher, who, roused to fury by the pain, picked up a cleaver and made for him. Lamb turned and fled in great trepidation, darted in at the back door of the East India House, and scurried up to his room, where he sank panting into a chair. "What ever's the matter?" asked one of the clerks. "Bu—butcher after me," was the agitated reply. "And what else is to be expected," came the swift rejoinder, "when a lamb goes trotting into the Market!" The second not long ago appeared in print, but in a form which hardly does justice to it. One of his fellow-clerks, who was prone to harp upon his social position and kindred topics, was one day maintaining that a gentleman, properly so styled, was incapable of deviating into actions not befitting his breeding. Lamb, a little nettled at the importance of the stress thus laid upon points of etiquette, declared that every one had some peculiarity, or made occasional slips, incapable of defence from that point of view. To this the first speaker replied that he hoped he himself was never guilty, in any circumstances, of an ungentlemanlike action. "Look here now," broke in Lamb, "which hand do you use in wiping your nose?" "The right of course," was the reply given after some consideration. "Well, surely a gentleman would use a handkerchief!"

The question is sometimes asked whether the present India Office, as residuary legatee of the old Company, possesses any relics of Charles Lamb; and particularly whether the "massy tomes," which it was his daily duty to keep, are yet to be seen and handled. On the dusty shelves of the East India House he left, he says, his "works . . . more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas wrote, and full as useful." Where are they now? The answer is that, like all the other purely commercial records of the Company, they have long ago been swept out of existence.[1] There are, however, a few mementoes of Lamb preserved at Westminster. The copy of Booth's *Tables of Interest*, from which "he daily received inexpressible official facilities," is still treasured in the Accountant-General's department; and in it may be seen, written in Lamb's careful hand, three mock reviews, alluding to the great *interest* of the work, and the way in which that interest "rises to the end." [2] The various bonds signed by Lamb and his sureties are among the official records; and it is possible that the desk at which he worked is still in use, though no longer to be identified, among other items of furniture brought from Leadenhall Street. Most striking of all, however, is the large oil portrait of Lamb by Henry Meyer, which now hangs in the room of the Under Secretary of State. This was painted in 1826, just after Lamb's retirement, and in the opinion of many competent judges it is the best likeness of him extant. It was purchased

[1] Sir Algernon West, who was Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for India from 1861 to 1866, states in his *Reminiscences*, that "an American came over to study these documents, which [Sir John] Kaye told me could nowhere be found." He also quotes, in an altered form, the lines given below (p. 229) as by Peacock, but ascribes them to Lamb.

[2] For a facsimile see *Relics of the Honourable East India Company*, by Sir George Birdwood and William Foster.

Scratched on Copper from Life in 1834 by his friend Brook Pulham.

CHARLES LAMB

a few years ago from Miss Talfourd, the daughter of Lamb's friend.

The sketch portrait here given has a peculiar interest, in that the artist was Lamb's fellow-clerk, Pulham, already mentioned in connexion with the Dutch view of the East India House. It was drawn just about the time of his retirement. In June, 1826, Lamb sent a copy of it to Coleridge, remarking that the likeness "was stolen from my person at one of my unguarded moments by some too partial artist, and my friends are pleased to think that he has not much flattered me"; and again, in the following year, he wrote to Barton that it was "a little sixpenny thing, too like by half, in which the draughtsman has done his best to avoid flattery. There have been two editions of it, which I think are all gone, as they have vanish'd from the window where they hung, a print shop, corner of Great and Little Queen Streets, Lincoln's Inn Fields." According to Leigh Hunt, Procter was so enraged at what he considered to be a caricature of his friend that he "went into the shop in a passion and asked the man what he meant by putting forth such a libel."

We come now to the story of Lamb's retirement from the East India House. A severe illness in the winter of 1824–25 left him depressed and nervous. Three years earlier, upon the completion of his thirtieth year of service, he had commenced to long "for a few years between the grave and the desk." "I had thought," he wrote to Wordsworth, "in a green old age (O green thought!) to have retired to Ponder's End (emblematic name, how beautiful!) in the Ware Road, there to have made up my accounts with Heaven and the Company. . . . The hope is gone. I sit like Philomel all day (but not singing) with my breast against this thorn of a desk, with the only hope

that some pulmonary affliction may relieve me." At that time Joseph Hume was thundering against the extravagances of the pension system, and Lamb abandoned all hope of retirement " on this side of absolute incapacitation and infirmity." Now, however, physical weakness revived his longing for rest, while at the same time it provided a reasonable excuse for bringing the matter forward. What followed is related in detail in his letters and in the familiar essay on *The Superannuated Man*;[1] and to tell the story over again (except in the briefest manner) were but to spoil it. Acting on a kindly hint from his official superiors, and armed with medical certificates from Coleridge's friend, Gilman, and another practitioner, he tendered his resignation. After nine weeks of suspense it was accepted. On the minutes of the Court of Directors for March 29, 1825, may still be read the resolution " that the resignation of Mr. Charles Lamb of the Accountant-General's office, on account of certified ill-health, be accepted ; and, it appearing that he has served the Company faithfully for thirty-three years . . . he be allowed a pension of £450 per annum."[2] The resolution was communicated to him immediately, and that same night he " went home *for ever*."

[1] This essay presents the usual mixture of fact and fancy. L——, the " junior partner," is probably Lloyd, who was then Accountant-General ; but we cannot identify B—— or the remaining " partners." Lamb would naturally dress up the story before publishing it, for he never allowed himself to be drawn into making use in this way of his relations with those who might object to find themselves in print. This decent reticence was in a great measure the cause of the introduction into his narratives of many imaginary particulars, with the result that, as he expressly warns us, " they are in truth but shadows of fact—verisimilitudes, not verities—or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history."

[2] The amount actually paid him each year was £441, as the sum of £9 per annum, which, under the rules of the office, had been deducted from his salary to make provision for a possible wife, was by permission continued in favour of his sister. Mary Lamb enjoyed in consequence a substantial allowance from his death until her own.

Thus, after having "served the Philistines" for thirty years and more, he was at length free to follow his own fancies; to take protracted walks along the Ware Road, which stretched so invitingly towards "the green fields of pleasant Hertfordshire"; to "indent the flags of Pall Mall," and anon to "digress into Soho to explore a bookstall"; or, again, in more industrious mood, to spend hours among Garrick's play-books in the reading-room (the later print-room) of the British Museum. "I am no longer a clerk," he was now able to say, "I am Retired Leisure. . . . I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself."

The day was destined to be but a short one, and nightfall came all too swiftly. Lamb was but fifty when he quitted the service of the Company; yet less than ten years of life were left to him. Not only so, but the happiness he had hoped to find proved more and more elusive. The increasing frequency of his sister's aberrations was a heavy burden for a back which grew daily less able to bear the strain. The leisure to which he had looked so eagerly was largely spent in listening to her incoherent babblings —that rambling chat which was to him "better than the sense and sanity of this world." In her lucid intervals they played piquet together, or talked gravely but firmly of the inevitable separation looming nearer and nearer. In 1830 Hazlitt died. Four years later that "great and dear spirit," Coleridge, passed away after long suffering. The blow to Lamb was stunning in its severity; and the loss of this earliest and best-loved friend doubtless accelerated his own decease. Towards the close of the year a fall while walking caused a trifling wound. No harm was expected to result; but the general feebleness of his health

brought on erysipelas, and upon Saturday, January 3, 1835, he was borne to his rest in a quiet part of Edmonton churchyard—there to await the coming, twelve years later, of the sister who had been throughout his life at once his greatest joy and his chiefest care.

XIV

THE EXAMINER'S DEPARTMENT

AMONG the home servants of the Company the Secretary naturally took precedence, in view of the antiquity of the office and his close relations with the Court of Directors. But almost equal to the Secretary in influence, and greater perhaps in responsibility, stood another official, whose duties were somewhat faintly indicated by his title of "Examiner of Indian Correspondence." In his department were prepared the bulk of the Company's dispatches to the various governments in India, and he was practically the Directors' chief adviser on all matters affecting the administration of that country. When it is added that this important post was held in turn by three men who, outside their official duties, won for themselves distinguished places in the annals of the time, no apology will be needed for devoting a few pages to some account of the department and its chiefs.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the responsibility of digesting practically the whole of the dispatches received from India, and of drafting the Directors' replies, rested on the shoulders of one man; and this individual, Samuel Johnson by name, was supposed to be qualified to advise his employers on all questions—political, revenue, judicial, or military—that were brought to their notice. Naturally, this system came near to breaking down. Although Johnson had a number of assistants, it was found

impossible to deal promptly with the rapidly growing correspondence; and it became not unusual for an India letter to remain unanswered for three or four years, or even longer. At last an effort was made to lighten the labours of the Examiner, and in 1804 the duty of dealing with military correspondence was handed over, by a curious arrangement, to the Auditor of Indian Accounts, who was already responsible for correspondence on financial topics. Apparently this change was not found satisfactory; for a few years later the military work was transferred to a secretary specially appointed for that purpose. In 1809 two Assistant Secretaries were introduced, to whom was entrusted the control, under Johnson's supervision, of the judicial and revenue correspondence respectively, while an Assistant Examiner took charge of the miscellaneous subjects grouped under the head of Public. Political matters, as being the most important, remained under the direct care of the Examiner. Thus matters stood for several years, except that in 1817 Samuel Johnson retired and his place was taken by William M'Culloch, who had been for some time his principal assistant.

In 1819 came a great change. Rundall, the chief Assistant Examiner, and Halhed, one of the Assistant Secretaries appointed ten years before, retired simultaneously; and as the other Assistant Secretaryship had been vacant for some time, the Directors had three appointments to fill up at once in this important department. The matter was carefully considered by the Committee of Correspondence, who on May 12, 1819, made a special report on the subject. In this they pointed out that the work had been for some time falling seriously into arrear; that the business of the department had much increased, and was likely to increase still further; many questions,

they said, connected with the internal administration of India had acquired additional importance of late years, and the necessity was apparent for a "higher than ordinary standard of qualifications for a satisfactory and even a tolerable discharge of that duty." They had reluctantly come to the conclusion that none of the clerks in the department possessed the requisite attainments, and they recommended therefore the provisional appointment of three gentlemen from outside as Assistants to the Examiner. As some compensation to the clerks who were thus passed over, the creation of a fourth Assistantship was suggested, for which one of their number, Mr. J. J. Harcourt, was proposed, with consequent promotion for each of his juniors.

The three new names submitted by the Committee were those of Mr. Edward Strachey, Mr. James Mill, and Mr. Thomas Love Peacock. The first of these was a retired member of the Bengal Civil Service, who had gone out in 1793, and after serving, mostly in a judicial capacity, at various stations in the North-Western Provinces and Bengal, had returned to England in 1811.[1] Of James Mill

[1] He was the second son of Sir Henry Strachey, Bart., M.P., Clive's former secretary. Carlyle, in his *Reminiscences*, describes him as "a genially abrupt man; 'Utilitarian' and Democrat by creed, yet beyond all things he loved Chaucer and kept reading him. A man rather tacit than discursive; but willing to speak, and doing it well, in a fine, tinkling, mellow-toned voice, in an ingenious aphoristic way; had withal a pretty vein of quiz, which he seldom indulged in. A man sharply impatient of pretence, of sham and untruth in all forms; especially contemptuous of 'quality' pretensions and affectations, which he scattered grinningly to the winds. Dressed in the simplest form; walked daily to the India House and back, though there were fine carriages in store for the women part; scorned cheerfully 'the general humbug of the world,' and honestly strove to do his own bit of duty, spiced by Chaucer and what else of inward harmony or condiment he had. . . . A man of many qualities: comfortable to be near." Many of his traits are reflected in the character of the Squire in his son's *Talks at a Country House*; and we probably are not wrong in identifying him with the "retired Bengal judge" mentioned in that work, of whom it is said that "such is the force of habit that, when he had occasion to take notes of

the Committee remarked: "This gentleman's character is before the public as the author of a *History of India*, and from the research displayed in the course of that work, as also from private testimony, the Committee have every reason to believe that his talents will prove beneficial to the Company's interests." Thomas Love Peacock had recently sprung into notice by the publication, in rapid succession, of *Headlong Hall*, *Melincourt*, and *Nightmare Abbey*; but city men do not, as a rule, look for business ability in a novelist, and it may be surmised that his appointment was largely due to the influence of his friend, Peter Auber, the Company's Secretary. The canvass for these appointments had been going on for some months; and Auber had done his best to further Peacock's interests by procuring him temporary employment in the Examiner's Department from the preceding Christmas.[1] Mill had made formal application by a letter dated March 22, 1819; but as early as February he had hinted to a correspondent that "friends of mine among the East India Directors have views in my favour of considerable importance in the East India House," and by April his supporters, prominent among whom were Ricardo, Hume, and Place, were making every effort to secure his appointment. The "Chairs" were favourable to him, solely on the ground of his ability and knowledge; and George Canning, then President of the Board of Control, is said to have lent his powerful influence.[2]

an important trial at the Somersetshire assizes, he actually wrote them in Persian rather than in the English words in which the evidence was given, just as he had done, many years before, when trying dakoits at Jessore."

It is scarcely necessary to recall that two of Edward Strachey's sons—Sir John and Sir Richard—added fresh lustre to the family name by their splendid services to India.

[1] According to Mr. Van Doren's *Life of Peacock* (p. 139), some form of examination, which Peacock passed with flying colours, had been imposed.

[2] Bain's *Life of James Mill*, pp. 167, 185.

The Committee's report was considered by the Directors on May 18, 1819, when the recommendations it contained were discussed and approved. To Strachey was allotted a salary of £1000 per annum; to Mill, £800; and to Peacock, £600. Harcourt, the fourth Assistant, was given £800 a year, his previous services being taken into account. All four appointments were to be regarded as probationary, and the arrangement was to be reconsidered at the end of two years. Their specific duties are not mentioned; but it would seem that Strachey took the judicial branch, Mill the revenue, and Harcourt the public, while M'Culloch himself looked after political matters. Peacock probably attended to the miscellaneous subjects which did not come under any of those four heads.

It was a bold measure to entrust important duties of this nature to three men of mature years,[1] of whom two were entirely destitute of the customary training, and the third had had but a few months. One can fancy the general shaking of bewildered heads, and the loudly expressed disgust of the men who had been for years engaged in producing drafts on the pattern sanctioned by the usage of generations—assenting here, carping there, referring to forgotten orders of twenty years previous, or postponing a decision until the receipt of further information. "The style as *we* like is the Humdrum," a Director is reported to have replied to a youthful aspirant who inquired what was the best method to adopt in composing official dispatches. Harcourt and his juniors had no doubt cultivated with care the style of the Humdrum; yet here, by a *bouleversement* not to be expected from so eminently conservative a body as the Directors, they were pushed aside for new-comers who probably would not care a straw

[1] Strachey was 45, Mill 46, and Peacock 34 at the time of appointment.

for tradition or precedent. However, the experiment was fully justified by its success. On April 10, 1821, the Correspondence Committee brought up another report, which stated that the services of the three new Assistants "have been strongly recommended by the gentlemen who have filled the Chairs since that period, and have been approved by the Committee in various instances wherein they have had an opportunity of witnessing the result of their labors." They submitted, therefore, "that those gentlemen be admitted permanently on the establishment of the Examiner's Office." This the Court approved; and at the same time added £200 to the salary of each, the increase to take effect from the preceding Lady Day.

James Mill was now fairly in the saddle, and quickly made his powers felt. The favourable impression produced by his ability and assiduity was shown by the resolution come to by the Court on April 9, 1823, to raise his salary to £1200 from Lady Day, and to grant him the title of Assistant Examiner, his former colleagues (of whom Peacock also received an increase of £200) being subtly distinguished as Assistants *under* the Examiner. This meant, of course, that he was placed above Strachey, who thereupon handed in his resignation. The Court accepted it, but with such expressions of regret that the way was left open to him to reconsider the matter; and a few weeks later he asked and obtained leave to withdraw his letter and resume his place.

At the same meeting which decided Mill's promotion, it was resolved to add another clerk to the Examiner's Department; and the nomination having been placed at the disposal of the Chairman, Mr. James Pattison, he gave it to John Stuart Mill, who thus got his foot on the official ladder which his father was climbing with so much

success.[1] The actual date of appointment was May 21, 1823, when John Mill had just turned seventeen. The first three years of his service, which ranked as a kind of apprenticeship, were rewarded, as usual, with a gratuity of £30 only; but once past this stage his rise was almost as rapid as his father's had been. In March, 1827, he was given a special gratuity of £200 for his "zeal and assiduity"; and a year later the Court "resolved by the ballot that Mr. John Mill, the eleventh clerk in the office of the Examiner of Indian Correspondence, who has been employed in the corresponding department since his first appointment and who has been reported well qualified for that duty, and to whose application, industry, and general good conduct the the Examiner has borne the strongest testimony, be removed from his present situation, and appointed as Assistant to the Examiner next under Mr. Harcourt, with an addition of £200 to his present salary, making his total allowance £310 per annum." He thus jumped over the heads of the ten clerks above him, though his salary remained a comparatively small one. This, however, was partially remedied by a special gratuity of £200, which was given to him each year from 1829 up to 1834, when the allowance was made a permanent addition to his salary, which had by that time reached £420.

[1] Since 1814 the Mill family had been residing at No. 1 Queen's Square, Westminster (now 40 Queen Anne's Gate), and thence father and son would walk daily to the office, probably with many a discussion on the way. In 1831 a move was made to a large detached villa in Vicarage Place, Kensington, afterwards called Maitland House. From about 1822 James Mill was in the habit of taking a summer residence in Surrey, his chosen headquarters in later years being the village of Mickleham, between Leatherhead and Dorking. There the family would remain for six months in each year, and there Mill spent the six weeks of his annual holiday. The rest of the time he went thither from Friday to Monday, while John, who (not being the head of a department) had to make the usual Saturday attendance, would come down on the Saturday afternoon.

With James Mill's outside work—important as it was—we have here nothing to do, but we must record a few more facts about his official career. On September 16, 1829, "as a mark of the Court's approbation of the great attention and ability with which he has discharged the duties of his office," his salary was increased by £300, to date from the 29th of that month. A year later M'Culloch intimated his intention of retiring,[1] and the Committee of Correspondence advised that Mill should be appointed to succeed him. The matter was debated by the Directors at a meeting held on December 8, 1830, when considerable opposition was manifested. It was urged that M'Culloch's post should not be filled up—meaning apparently that Mill was to do the work on his existing salary. This, however, was negatived; and it was resolved that he should be made Examiner from Christmas, at £1900 a year, and that the vacancy thus created should not be filled, but Strachey and Peacock should be appointed Senior Assistants on £1200 (a rise of £200 for the latter).

The next event of importance in the history of the department was the death of Strachey. This necessitated the appointment of some one to look after the judicial work; and, as Indian experience was apparently considered essential, a new Assistant was introduced (February 8, 1832), to rank next below Peacock, with a salary of £1000. The person chosen was David Hill, who had spent eighteen years in the Madras Civil Service and had recently been Chief Secretary in that Presidency.

[1] Professor Bain says that he was told "that M'Culloch's reputation as an administrator was very high, his despatches being accounted perfect models and even superior to Mill's." As, however, this statement is traceable to Horace Grant, a clerk in the Examiner's Department who bore a grudge against James Mill, the Professor thinks that the comparison is not altogether to be trusted.

JAMES MILL

The Company was now in the midst of the great struggle which was to terminate its existence as a commercial body. During the period that had elapsed since the last renewal of its charter, public opinion had set strongly against the continuance of its privileges, especially of its monopoly of the China trade. The growth of liberal views, the stimulus given to commerce by the conclusion of a general peace, and the consequent cry for new markets, had made the merchants of England unanimous in demanding unrestricted access to the ports of the Far East; and in this they could count on the hearty support of the general public, aggrieved by the high price of tea. The chief plea urged by the Company in defence of its monopoly was that from the profits of this trade came not only the dividends of the proprietors, but also the wherewithal to meet the deficits of the Indian administration; but this provoked the obvious retort that there was no reason why the nation should pay a high price for an article of prime importance in order to find funds for these two purposes. As early as 1820 Committees of both Houses of Parliament had reported in favour of a relaxation of the restrictions imposed by the Company; but the Government of the day refused to take action, and attempts made nine years later to raise the question afresh were foiled in like manner.

However, action of some sort was so clearly necessary, in order to satisfy public opinion, that early in the session of 1830 Committees were appointed both in the Lords and Commons "to inquire into the present state of the East India Company and the trade between the East Indies, Great Britain, and China." In July both Committees submitted preliminary reports, dealing chiefly with the China trade; but the further prosecution of their inquiries was stopped by the dissolution entailed by the death of

the King, and the matter was not taken up again until February, 1831—this time by a Committee of the Commons alone. Even then, the conflict over the Reform Bill brought about a fresh appeal to the country in April, and a third Committee was not constituted until the end of June.

Ministers had already avowed their intention of throwing open the trade with China, and consequently the Committee turned its attention chiefly to the details of Indian administration. James Mill was called in August, and his evidence lasted through eight sittings. It was restricted to revenue matters, and is remarkable for its thoroughgoing defence of the existing system. He strongly condemned the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, and suggested as a partial remedy the purchase by Government of the *zamindari* rights as they came into the market, to be followed by a resettlement with the tenants on the old hereditary principle. Asked as to the probity or otherwise of the subordinate native officials, he replied that there was "a total absence of a moral feeling in the country. . . . It is not shameful to be dishonest in a public trust." These and other answers appear to have irritated certain of the members opposed to the Company, and on the last day of his examination he was pointedly asked: "Do you conceive that it is possible for any person to form an adequate judgment of the character of a people without being personally acquainted with them?" to which he made the quiet reply: "If the question refers to myself, I am far from pretending to a perfect knowledge of the character of the people of India."

The Committee briefly reported, on October 11, 1831, the evidence they had taken; but everybody's attention was absorbed by the struggle over the Reform Bill—which

the Lords had thrown out three days before—and no attempt was made to deal with the question of India during the rest of the session. On January 27, 1832, the appointment of a Committee was once again moved and agreed to. This time sub-committees were formed, who took up the subject in six branches. On four of these Mill was again examined. He expressed himself in favour of relieving the Supreme Government from the task of conducting the local administration of Bengal; he also advocated the substitution of Lieutenant-Governors for the Governors of Madras and Bombay, and the amalgamation of the Presidential armies. He strongly supported the recommendation of the Indian Government for the establishment of a Legislative Council, which he would constitute of one or more experienced civilians, one lawyer, one native, and an individual "thoroughly versed in the philosophy of man and of government." The existing exemption of Europeans from the jurisdiction of the Company's courts he severely condemned, as well as other defects in the judicial system. He considered the use of Persian in the law courts an absurdity, but the substitution of English would have an equally bad effect; the only proper course was to employ judges familiar with the vernacular. He approved the opening of the civil service to public competition (of the Haileybury system he had come to an opinion "by no means favourable"), and would also do what was possible to educate the natives. As regards the employment of the latter in Government service, he would observe strict impartiality, taking the best man for the post, whether a native or a European. On revenue topics, he repeated his conviction of the "pernicious" effects of the Permanent Settlement, and opposed the abolition of the salt duty ("I know of no

substitute for the tax on salt which would be so little onerous to the people ") ; while as regards opium he could " see no objection to the present mode at all." Questioned as to the native states, he expressed strong opinions regarding the misery caused by their misgovernment—a misgovernment which, he thought, the policy in vogue did much to perpetuate by abstaining from any real interference in the internal administration of those states, whilst guaranteeing their rulers against the natural remedy, rebellion. Either, he said, the states should be left entirely alone (a course which he admitted was in most cases out of the question) or the administration should be taken over and the princes reduced to the position of pensioners.

The Committee reported to the House on August 16, 1832 ; but the close of the session prevented further action. Meanwhile a long and elaborate correspondence went on between the Court of Directors and the Board of Control regarding the terms to be allowed to the Company by the Government ; and in this Mill of course bore a leading part. We need not enter into the details of the controversy, except to say that the honours of debate appear to have fallen to the Company's representatives, and that considerable concessions were obtained as the result of their efforts.

The Bill was introduced in the Commons at the end of June, 1833, and was read a second time on July 10, when Macaulay, as Secretary of the India Board, made a masterly speech in its favour. Part of his task was to justify to the Reformed Parliament the abstention of the Government from any attempt to provide India with representative institutions ; and in doing this he made a clever use of the evidence given by Mill, whom he characterized as a " gentleman extremely well acquainted with the affairs of our

Eastern Empire, a most valuable servant of the Company, and the author of a *History of India* which, though certainly not free from faults, is, I think, on the whole the greatest historical work which has appeared in our language since that of Gibbon." "That gentleman," he said, "is well known to be a very bold and uncompromising politician. He has written strongly, far too strongly I think, in favour of pure democracy. He has gone so far as to maintain that no nation which has not a representative legislature, chosen by universal suffrage, enjoys security against oppression. But when he was asked, before the Committee of last year, whether he thought representative government practicable in India, his answer was: 'utterly out of the question.'"

The Bill emerged from Committee practically unaltered, and was carried up to the Lords at the end of July. A few amendments were made, in which the Commons concurred, and in August the measure became part of the law of the land.

The passing of the Act was followed by the appointment of Macaulay to the newly created post of Legal Member of the Governor-General's Council — an appointment generously supported by Mill, who bore no malice for the attacks which the younger man had made on him in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*.[1] "The late Chairman," wrote Macaulay to his sister, "consulted him about me; hoping, I suppose, to have his support against me. Mill said, very handsomely, that he would advise the Company to take me; for, as public men went, I was much above

[1] With equal generosity Macaulay refused to include these articles in his *Collected Essays*, and in the preface expressed regret for his "unbecoming acrimony" and his satisfaction that Mill "was, when his valuable life closed, on terms of cordial friendship with his assailant."

the average and, if they rejected me, he thought it very unlikely that they would get anybody so fit." Between Macaulay's appointment and his sailing, he and Mill held frequent conferences. Another consequence most welcome to the latter was the nomination of a small commission to inquire into the Indian judicial system, with Macaulay as president. One of the commissioners, Mr. Charles Hay Cameron (afterwards himself Legal Member), was an old friend of Mill, who eight years before had endeavoured, but without success, to get him elected to the chair of philosophy in the newly founded University of London. He too availed himself of every opportunity of consulting Mill before setting out to take up his post. In August, 1834, the latter writes to Brougham: "Cameron has been down with me for some days, mainly with a view to go into the details of his magnificent charge. He views it with the proper spirit; and I doubt not India will be the first country on earth to boast of a system of law and judicature as near perfection as the circumstances of the people would admit." How well this anticipation was fulfilled by the Criminal Code, which was the outcome of the Commission's labours, is now a matter of common knowledge.

In 1835 a writership in the Bengal Presidency was procured for Mill's second son, James Bentham Mill. He went through the ordinary routine of appointments, serving mostly in the North-Western Provinces; retired in 1852; and died ten years later. A younger son, George Grote Mill, was appointed a clerk in the India House in 1844. He is described as very able and of a genial temperament, but constitutionally delicate. Having contracted lung disease through overtasking his strength in a Swiss walking tour, he was obliged to give up his post in 1850,

and died at Madeira three years later. Some account of him will be found in an article by David Masson on "Memories of London in the Forties," which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* for February, 1908.

Early in 1836 several changes were made in the Examiner's Department, in consequence of the retirement of Harcourt, whose place was not filled up. James Mill's salary was raised to £2000; the title of Assistant Examiner was revived and given to Peacock with £1500 a year; while the salaries of Hill and John Mill were made £1200 and £800 respectively. John Mill was not yet thirty years of age.

James Mill was now nearly sixty-three, and his life of strenuous toil had of late told rapidly on his health. In August, 1835, he had had an ominous hæmorrhage of the lungs, followed by considerable weakness; and, although he got back to London from Mickleham in the autumn, he was unable to resume his duties at the India House. However, he was still hopeful, and wrote to Lord Brougham in January, "They tell me that, if I take care till the good weather comes, I shall be well again." But he grew weaker and weaker, and before long it became evident that he would never see Leadenhall Street any more. As the end drew near, his affection for his children showed through the mask of reserve which he had hitherto chosen to wear. John was in bad health, and had been ordered by the doctor to Brighton; James was in India; and only George and Henry remained with the stricken father. "Although," wrote Henry, "he seldom said anything about it, never by way of complaint, yet he sometimes, when he thought he should not recover, used to say to me or George that he would very willingly die, if it were not that he left us too young to be sure how we should turn out." In June his

friend Place wrote : " Stayed too long with poor Mill, who showed much more sympathy and affection than ever before in all our long friendship. But he was all the time as much of a bright, reasoning man as he ever was—reconciled to his fate, brave and calm." After a time bronchitis supervened, and on June 23, 1836, the sufferer passed away. He was buried in the old parish church at Kensington, and a marble tablet erected to his memory. The church has since been rebuilt, and the tablet is now to be found in the porch.

To the question how the elder Mill appeared to his Leadenhall Street associates and what manner of man he was during business hours, tradition gives little answer. We gather, however, that he was a strict disciplinarian, scrupulously observing office rules himself, and expecting others to observe them likewise. Genial and patient towards his subordinates he is not likely to have been, considering his natural coldness of disposition and irritability of temper ; but one may feel sure that he was inflexibly just in his dealings with them, and anxious to encourage and reward those who displayed industry and ability. " One thing is certain," writes Professor Bain, " that Mill acquired a very great amount of influence and authority with the Court of Directors. It is doubted whether any one before or since obtained the same share of their confidence. It has been said that, he being dead when the Macaulay Commission brought over their new Code for India, the Directors could not trust their own judgment so far as to put it in force." And this influence was not merely that which an official of long standing would naturally have with a heterogeneous body like the Court ; it was due largely to Mill's exceptional force of character. " He was a born leader—a king of men," says Professor

Bain with enthusiasm ; and even that coolest of filial critics, his eldest son, bears similar testimony : " My father's . . . senses and mental faculties were always on the alert ; he carried decision and energy of character in his whole manner and into every action of life ; and this, as much as his talents, contributed to the strong impression which he always made upon those with whom he came into personal contact."

Of the elder Mill's services to India, his son writes : " The influence which his talents, his reputation, and his decision of character gave him with superiors who really desired the good government of India, enabled him to a great extent to throw into his drafts of despatches, and to carry through the ordeal of the Court of Directors and Board of Control, without having their force much weakened, his real opinions on Indian subjects. In his *History* he had set forth, for the first time, many of the true principles of Indian administration : and his despatches, following his *History*, did more than had ever been done before to promote the improvement of India and teach Indian officials to understand their business. If a selection of them were published, they would, I am convinced, place his character as a practical statesman fully on a level with his eminence as a speculative writer."

On July 27, 1836, the Court of Directors took into consideration the arrangements to be made for filling up the gap left by the death of the Examiner. It was decided to promote Peacock to the vacant post ; Hill to the Assistantship ; and John Mill to the position hitherto held by Hill. All these appointments were to reckon from midsummer. John Mill, whose income was thus increased to £1200 a year, was at this time incapacitated by an obstinate brain trouble ; he therefore obtained three

months' sick leave and took his brothers to the Continent for a prolonged rest.

Of Peacock, who had now become head of the department, and remained so for over twenty years, little need be said. Interest in his works has revived of late, and the main facts of his life are well known. In many respects he was the complete antithesis of his predecessor. "A kindly, genial, laughter-loving man, rather fond of good eating and drinking, or at least of talking as if he were so;" [1] an ardent champion of old institutions and old customs; deeply versed in classical literature and always ready to exalt it at the expense of modern writers;[2] fond of tilting at political economy and at schemes "for the improvement of the masses"—at everything, in fact, for which James Mill and his school were working. Yet they were in reality good friends, and Peacock is said to have refrained from republishing his *Paper Money Lyrics* lest he should vex Mill by so doing. He loved, however, to poke fun at his colleague's associates. "One day," writes Sir Edward Strachey, "he came to my father's room, and said, with mock indignation: 'I will never dine with Mill again, for he asks me to meet only political economists. I dined with him last night, when he had Mushet and MacCulloch; [3]

[1] *Recollections of T. L. Peacock*, by the late Sir Edward Strachey (son of the Edward Strachey who was Peacock's colleague). See also Sir John Hobhouse's account in *Recollections of a Long Life*, vol. v. p. 296.

[2] Witness the account of the Lake School in his *Four Ages of Poetry*, particularly the delicious description of Southey's method of working: "Mr. Southey wades through ponderous volumes of travels and old chronicles, from which he carefully selects all that is false, useless, and absurd, as being essentially poetical; and when he has a commonplace book full of monstrosities, strings them into an epic."

[3] Robert Mushet, an official in the Royal Mint who wrote much on currency; and John Ramsay MacCulloch, the well-known political economist. Whether the latter was related to the M'Culloch of the East India House I have not succeeded in ascertaining.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

and after dinner Mushet took a paper out of his pocket and began to read: "In the infancy of society, when Government was invented to save a percentage, say of 3½ per cent"—on which he was stopped by MacCulloch with "I will say no such thing," meaning that this was not the proper percentage.'" This incident, as Mr. Van Doren has pointed out, was turned to account by Peacock in *Crotchet Castle*.

Of the terms subsisting between Peacock and that "disquisitive youth," as he once termed the younger Mill, we know nothing; but it may perhaps be inferred that there was little sympathy between them. Disparity in age and difference of opinion on most subjects will partly account for this; and it may be added that Mill, though he could appreciate a joke, had little humour in his composition, and was the last man to relish a stream of witticisms directed against views he held to be of importance to the world. Throughout his *Autobiography* he makes no mention whatever of his official chief, and even when narrating his friendship with John Arthur Roebuck, he does not allude to the fact that the latter was introduced to him (at the India House) by Peacock, to whom Roebuck was related. "Peacock's literary style," remarks Strachey, "was elaborately polished, and he disliked writing letters, lest he should fall into any fault in hasty composition. His official despatches were described by my father as 'neat and exact, characteristic of the man.'" A subject in which he took especial interest was steam communication with India; for though as a rule he disliked modern inventions (especially gas, competitive examinations, paper money, and parliamentary reform), on the use of iron and steam for ships he was ahead of his age. He was one of the first to advocate the Euphrates Valley route to India, and he

assisted largely in promoting General Chesney's explorations with that object. His evidence on this question before the Parliamentary Committee of 1832 contains much that is valuable. He mentioned a proposal to go to India round the Cape by steamer in sixty days, but thought its accomplishment improbable.[1] He admitted that a ship canal from Suez to the Mediterranean would provide a suitable steamer route, though it would be prejudicial to British interests as benefiting continental ports to the detriment of English. The great objection to the Red Sea route was the cost of coal, which was enormous. He considered that an overland route through Aleppo, with steamers on the Euphrates, would be much preferable to the existing one by way of Egypt and the Red Sea; and in this connexion, with true Peacockian humour, he furnished the Committee with information regarding the freight of boats on the Euphrates in the time of Herodotus and some details of the expeditions of Trajan and Julian by that route. He also appeared on behalf of the Company before Parliamentary Committees in 1834, when the expulsion of James Silk Buckingham from India was the subject of inquiry, and in 1836, when he defended the salt monopoly against the attacks of the Cheshire manufacturers.

In the office itself, tradition relates, Peacock was known "as a teller of good stories. Wherever he went he kept those around him in roars of laughter, and he was an immense favourite with all the Directors."[2] According to a statement by one of his subordinates, quoted by Mr. Van Doren in the *Life*, Peacock, though always kind to those under him, kept himself aloof from them

[1] He afterwards had the satisfaction of seeing steamers sent round the Cape, largely owing to his advocacy.

[2] Sir George Birdwood, in the *Journal of Indian Art*, July, 1890.

and never became so intimate with his staff as John Stuart Mill did.

Meanwhile John Mill was quietly preparing his dispatches, which were mostly on political[1] subjects—that branch being his particular care. In his *Autobiography* (p. 48) he makes some pregnant reflections on the influence of his official experiences on his work as an economist. "I am disposed to agree with what has been surmised by others, that the opportunity which my official position gave me of learning by personal observation the necessary conditions of the practical conduct of public affairs, has been of considerable value to me as a theoretical reformer of the opinions and institutions of my time. Not, indeed, that public business transacted on paper, to take effect on the other side of the globe, was of itself calculated to give much practical knowledge of life. But the occupation accustomed me to see and hear the difficulties of every course, and the means of obviating them, stated and discussed deliberately with a view to execution; it gave me opportunities of perceiving when public measures, and other political facts, did not produce the effects which had been expected of them, and from what causes; above all, it was valuable to me by making me, in this portion of my activity, merely one wheel in a machine, the whole of which had to work together. As a speculative writer, I should have had no one to consult but myself, and should have encountered in my speculations none of the obstacles which would have started up whenever they came to be applied to practice. But as a Secretary conducting

[1] Meaning chiefly the relations with the Indian States. In the Political Department of the India Office is preserved a list, in Mill's handwriting, of the dispatches he prepared from 1824 to 1858. The bulk were "political," a much smaller number "foreign" (relations with European powers), with a few on marine, public works, and ecclesiastical subjects.

political correspondence, I could not issue an order or express an opinion, without satisfying various persons very unlike myself that the thing was fit to be done. I was thus in a good position for finding out by practice the mode of putting a thought which gives it easiest admittance into minds not prepared for it by habit; while I became practically conversant with the difficulties of moving bodies of men, the necessities of compromise, the art of sacrificing the non-essential to preserve the essential. I learnt how to obtain the best I could, when I could not obtain everything; instead of being indignant or dispirited because I could not have entirely my own way, to be pleased and encouraged when I could have the smallest part of it; and when even that could not be, to bear with complete equanimity the being overruled altogether."

Whilst never neglecting his official duties, Mill found leisure during office hours to write a large number of letters and to do some literary work, such as articles for his *London Review*, or the first drafts of chapters for his projected work on Logic. In the British Museum is a letter from him to Carlyle (Addl. MS. 34,813), dated "India House, June 30, 1837," forwarding a copy of the *Review* in which he had written a eulogistic notice of his friend's *History of the French Revolution*. He adds: "I have very little to do here at present. I have worked off my arrear of business at this office, and the work does not now come in nearly as fast as I can do it. It is the way of my work to go in that sort of manner—in fits—and I like that well enough, as it gives me intervals of leisure. I am using this interval to get on with my book—a book I have done little to since the *Review* began, and which you will think very little worth doing—a treatise on Logic. I hope I do not overrate the value of anything I can do of that kind; but

it so happens that this, whatever be its value, is the only thing which I am sure I can do, and do not believe can be so well done by anybody else whom I know of. In regard to all things which are not merely for the day, that seems the best rule for chusing one's work. Further, I do it in order to deliver myself of various things which I have in my head on the subject. As for its being read, it will be so by fewer people than even yours [1]; but it may be of use to some of those few."

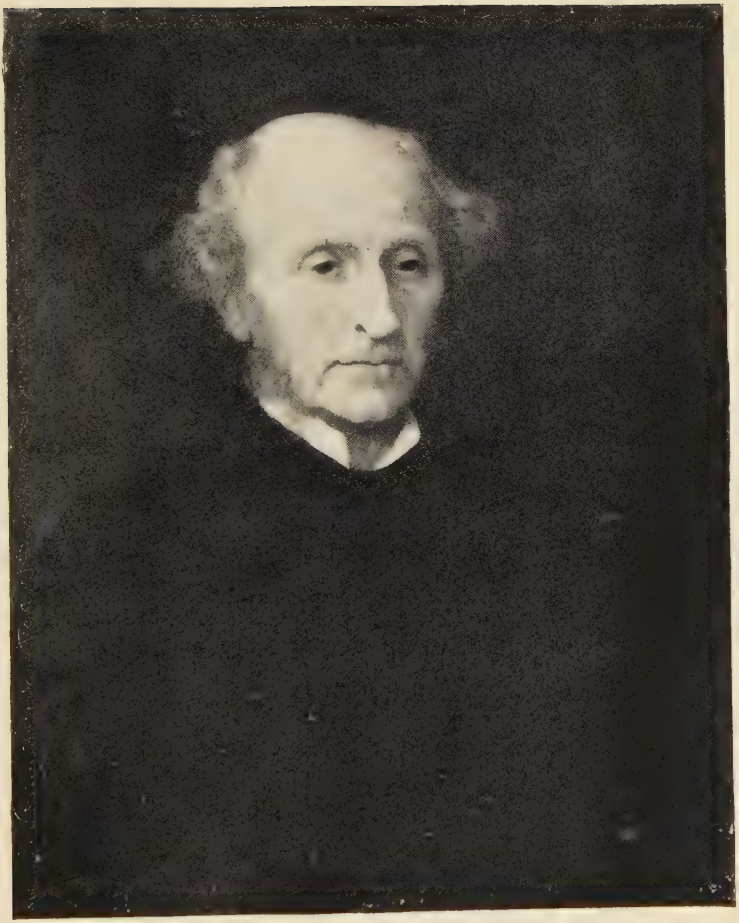
Of Mill's appearance, in April, 1842, we get an interesting description in Professor Bain's biography (p. 64): "I walked down to the India House with Robertson, and realized my dream of meeting Mill in person. I am not likely to forget the impression he made upon me, as he stood by his desk, with his face turned to the door as we entered. His tall slim figure, his youthful face and bald head, fair hair and ruddy complexion, and the twitching of his eyebrow when he spoke, first arrested the attention: then the vivacity of his manner, his thin voice approaching to sharpness, but with nothing shrill or painful about it, his comely features and sweet expression—would have all remained in my memory though I had never seen him again. To complete the picture, I should add his dress, which was constant—a black dress-suit with silk necktie. Many years after that he changed his dress-coat for a surtout; but black cloth was his choice to the end." With regard to Mill's surroundings the Professor adds:

"I trust that some one that served under the East India Company will leave to future historians, and lovers of picturesque effects, a full description of the Company's

[1] On this point Mill proved himself a poor prophet. The *Logic* went through eight editions in its author's lifetime; while the popularity of Carlyle's book seems inexhaustible.

dingy, capacious, and venerable building in Leadenhall Street. In common with a goodly number of persons, I have a vivid recollection of the great front, the pillared portal, and the line of passages conducting to Mill's room, from which I never had any occasion to deviate. On entering we passed the porter in his official uniform, including cocked hat, and walked straight forward by a long passage not less, I should think, than a hundred feet; then up two pair of very unpretentious flights of stairs. At the landing was a door, bearing on the top-lintel the inscription, 'Examiner's Office.' We entered a little room occupied by the messengers, where they could make tea for the officials (Mill had his breakfast provided in this way, on arriving at ten o'clock: tea, bread and butter, and a boiled egg).[1] Leaving this room we entered, by a baize spring door, the long clerks' room. To the right of the matted passage were the clerks' screened boxes adjoining the windows. At the far end just on emerging was a huge fire (in winter) which gave the room a sickly, stuffy temperature; nevertheless, as was natural, two or three of the clerks might be found standing in front, for additional warmth, or perhaps still more for conversation. Passing the fire, and throwing open a spring door, we were in a passage leading to the private rooms. One of these, the second I believe, was Mill's. There was an outside green baize door, always latched back to the wall; reminding us that the officials were servants of the Secret Committee, and might have to hold very confidential interviews. The room itself was very spacious, I should suppose nearly thirty feet long and about eighteen wide; it was lighted by

[1] This meal, Professor Bain tells us elsewhere, sufficed Mill for the whole official day, and he never ate or drank anything until he returned home to a simple dinner at six.



JOHN STUART MILL

three large windows. From the fire at one end to a book-press at the other, the whole length was free from furniture, and was Mill's promenade with papers in hand. While reading he was generally always on foot. At the angle between the fire and the nearest window, in a recess, was his standing desk, and near it his office table, which was covered with papers, and provided with drawers, but was not used according to his intention; he wrote at the tall desk either standing or sitting on a high stool. The chair for visitors was next the blank wall, beside a large table on which the India despatches used to lie in huge piles. For a long time he walked to and from his room by the route I have described; but latterly he changed it for a much more difficult one, whose windings my memory does not serve me to describe. What I remember is that (suppose we were leaving) on passing out of the messengers' anteroom, instead of descending the two flights of stairs to the long passage, he turned into another door in the landing, descended a few steps, and went by a long dreary corridor, with numerous locked presses for papers, and at the far end descended by a series of stairs that landed us close to the entrance hall. The chief thing that took my attention in this route was a notice board pointing out the hall or theatre for holding the meetings of the Court of Proprietors. It set forth that none but proprietors of five hundred pounds or upwards of Stock were admitted to the meetings. Mill's windows looked into a small brick court, consisting of officials' rooms; a clock was audible but not visible."

In his official room, one may add, Mill received from time to time many notable visitors, for it was an understood thing that any of his numerous friends were free to drop in upon him at the India House of an afternoon. Not the

least interesting of the meetings thus brought about occurred in February, 1835, when Thomas Carlyle, happening to call upon Mill, found with him " a loose, careless-looking, thin figure . . . carelessly and copiously talking," who was introduced to him as the John Sterling of whom he had heard so much from Mill and others. This was Carlyle's first glimpse of the remarkable man whose biography he was to write some fifteen years later.

We must now resume our chronicle of Mill's official career. Of his evidence before the Select Committee of 1852 nothing need here be said. On August 30, 1854, he was given from midsummer a special addition to his salary of £200, " in testimony of the high sense which the Court entertain of the admirable manner in which [he] conducts his important duties." In the same year a serious illness, which ended in the partial destruction of one lung, obliged him to take a long holiday on the Continent, in the course of which he visited Italy, Sicily, and Greece.

On March 28, 1858, Peacock and Hill retired together, and John Stuart Mill was appointed Examiner on the usual salary of £2000 a year. Peacock was over seventy years of age, and might well seek retirement on that ground ; but it is probably something more than a coincidence that just as M'Culloch had given place to the elder Mill when the Parliamentary struggle of 1830–33 was impending, so now a similar change placed the younger Mill in the fore-front of the defence against a further and, as it proved, a final, attack by the Legislature on the privileges of the Company. To him fell the task of finding arguments against the proposed abolition of that body ; and in this task, and particularly in the petition which he drafted for presentation to Parliament, " he brought to bear all his resources in the theory and practice of politics."

This document, which Earl Grey pronounced to be the ablest state-paper he had ever read, is a masterpiece of its kind. It commences by pointing out in stately fashion, "that your Petitioners, at their own expense and by the agency of their own civil and military servants, originally acquired for this country its magnificent empire in the East. That the foundations of this empire were laid by your Petitioners, at that time neither aided nor controlled by Parliament, at the same period at which a succession of administrations under the control of Parliament were losing to the Crown of Great Britain another great empire on the opposite side of the Atlantic. That during the period of about a century which has since elapsed, the Indian possessions of this country have been governed and defended from the resources of those possessions, without the smallest cost to the British Exchequer; which, to the best of your Petitioners' knowledge and belief, cannot be said of any other of the numerous foreign dependencies of the Crown." After recalling the fact that the Company's government had been repeatedly confirmed after full parliamentary inquiry, and noting the absence of any charge, on the part of Ministers, that the Company had at all failed in its duty, the petition goes on to say that as regards the recent Mutiny, which is apparently the chief reason for proposing a change, "your Petitioners challenge the most searching investigation . . . in order that it may be ascertained whether anything, either in the constitution of the Home Government of India or in the conduct of those by whom it has been administered, has had any share in producing the mutiny, or has in any way impeded the measures for its suppression; and whether the mutiny itself, or any circumstance connected with it, affords any evidence of the failure of the arrangements

under which India is at present administered." Even if it should be found that these arrangements had been defective, "the failure could constitute no reason for divesting the East India Company of its functions and transferring them to Her Majesty's Government, for, under the existing system, Her Majesty's Government have the deciding voice [and] . . . are thus, in the fullest sense, accountable for all that has been done, and for all that has been forborne or omitted to be done. . . . Under these circumstances, if the administration of India had been a failure, it would, your Petitioners submit, have been somewhat unreasonable to expect that a remedy would be found in annihilating the branch of the ruling authority which could not be the one principally in fault, and might be altogether blameless, in order to concentrate all powers in the branch which had necessarily the decisive share in every error, real or supposed. To believe that the administration of India would have been more free from error had it been conducted by a Minister of the Crown without the aid of the Court of Directors, would be to believe that the Minister, with full power to govern India as he pleased, has governed ill, because he has had the assistance of experienced and responsible advisers." This shrewd thrust at the Government no doubt delighted the Directors and their supporters; but, as no one knew better than Mill himself, it was really beside the question. The petition therefore at once takes a loftier tone. "Your Petitioners, however, do not seek to vindicate themselves at the expense of any other authority; they claim their full share of the responsibility of the manner in which India has practically been governed. That responsibility is to them not a subject of humiliation, but of pride; they are conscious that their advice and initiative have been, and have deserved

to be, a great and potent element in the conduct of affairs in India, and they feel complete assurance that the more attention is bestowed and the more light thrown upon India and its administration, the more evident it will become that the Government in which they have borne a part has been not only one of the purest in intention, but one of the most beneficent in act, ever known among mankind ; that during the last and the present generation in particular, it has been in all departments one of the most rapidly improving governments in the world ; . . . and they are satisfied that whatever further improvements may be hereafter effected in India can only consist in the development of germs already planted, and in building on foundations already laid, under their authority and in a great measure by their express instructions." The document then proceeds to argue that " even if the contemplated change could be proved to be in itself advisable, the present is a most unsuitable time for entertaining it," and that it would be wiser to defer the measure " until it can be effected at a period when it would not be, in the minds of the people of India, directly connected with the recent calamitous events, and with the feelings to which those events have either given rise or have afforded an opportunity of manifestation." Some trenchant criticisms and suggestions are then made regarding the proposed Council —all tending to prove that the existing system is after all the best—and the petition concludes with an earnest appeal to the House not to " sanction any change in the constitution of the Indian Government during the continuance of the present unhappy disturbances, nor without a full previous inquiry into the operation of the present system. . . . Such an inquiry your Petitioners respectfully claim, not only as a matter of justice to themselves, but because

when, for the first time in this century, the thoughts of every public man in the country are fixed on India, an inquiry would be more thorough, and its results would carry much more instruction to the mind of Parliament and of the country, than at any preceding period."

That Mill was absolutely sincere in his opposition to the abolition of the Company's rule is manifested in his *Autobiography*, where he comments strongly on " the folly and mischief of this ill-considered change," and predicts that it will convert the administration of India into " a thing to be scrambled for by the second and third class of English parliamentary politicians " ; while in a letter to an Australian correspondent he says : " The difficulty of governing India in any tolerable manner, already so much increased by the Mutiny and its consequences, will become an impossibility if a body so ignorant and incompetent on Indian (to say nothing of other) subjects as Parliament, comes to make a practice of interfering " (*Letters*, edited by Hugh Elliot, vol. i. p. 211). Even after the transfer had become an accomplished fact, he still expected disaster ; and he twice refused the offer of a seat on the new Council. Some of his friends still hoped that, when the opportunity came, he would be offered and would accept the highest post of all—that of Secretary of State for India ; but this was not to be. Probably he would have declined any such offer, as he certainly would have done that of a peerage, which Mr. Gladstone in 1869 thought of proposing, but was dissuaded by Lord Granville (Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 430).

His efforts on their behalf excited the warm gratitude of the Company, and on August 18, 1858, the Directors resolved that " with a view of marking the Court's appreciation of the valuable services which have been rendered to

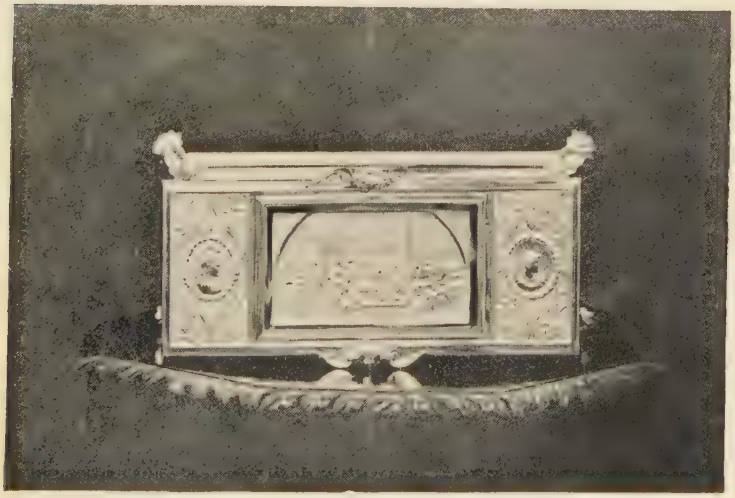
the East India Company during many years by Mr. John Stuart Mill, the Examiner of Indian Correspondence, and especially of the distinguished ability and unwearied zeal with which he has assisted the Court of Directors during the recent parliamentary discussions on the subject of the Home Government of India, Mr. Mill be presented with the sum of five hundred guineas." A fortnight later the great change of administration took place, and with it Mill's official career came to an end. He retired on a pension of £1500 per annum, at the age of fifty-two and after a service of thirty-five years.

I have spoken with several India House men who recollected Mill in his official days; but they could add little to what is already recorded concerning him. One and all bore emphatic testimony to his energy, ability, and kindliness of heart; and it was evident that he was regarded with affection and pride even by those of them to whom his views on political and other subjects were abhorrent. The chief physical characteristic they recalled was his fondness for walking. Out of doors he generally went at a very rapid pace, carrying an umbrella which he clutched at the base of the handle and held almost in front of him. In the office he would walk up and down his room when engaged in thought or even whilst conversing with friends—moving restlessly to and fro "like a hyena." Walking, indeed, was his sole form of athleticism. In even ordinary kinds of bodily activity he was extremely clumsy, a defect which Dr. Bain, with true professorial profundity, explains by saying that "his nervous energy was so completely absorbed in his unremitted intellectual application as to be unavailable for establishing the co-ordinations of muscular dexterity."

When, in 1873, Mill died at far Avignon, several dis-

tinguished men united to weave a wreath to his memory in a series of articles published in the *Examiner* (May 17, 1873). One of these was written by William Thomas Thornton, the political economist, who had been an assistant under Mill at the India House and his close personal friend; and with one or two extracts from this tribute we may fitly close these fragmentary notes. Thornton mentions that, whereas in ordinary course a junior clerk would have had nothing to do except a little abstracting, indexing, and searching (or pretending to search) records, young Mill was almost immediately set to work at drafting dispatches and, up to the time of his becoming Examiner, almost every political draft that left the department came from his pen. Concerning the famous petition of 1858 he tells the following characteristic story. At one of the last meetings of the Court of Proprietors, a certain Director, alluding to that document, spoke of it as having been drafted by an official who was sitting by his side, adding, after a moment's pause, "with the assistance, as he understood, of Mr. Mill." Thornton hastened to Mill to denounce this piece of injustice, but to his surprise he was met with the remark that after all the statement was quite true: "the petition was the joint work of —— and myself." "How can you be so perverse?" was the retort; "you know that I know you wrote every word of it." "No," rejoined Mill demurely, "you are mistaken; one whole line on the second page was put in by ——."

To Thornton, Mill was always a kind and considerate friend. When the Examinership was offered to him he would only accept it on condition that Thornton was made an Assistant. Not long after, when his friend was incapacitated for mental labour by nervous prostration, and retirement from the service seemed inevitable, Mill



INKSTAND PRESENTED TO MILL

saved the situation by taking upon himself, in addition to his own work, the whole of Thornton's duties; and he continued to discharge them until the latter was able to resume his post twelve months later. The only unpleasantness that occurred between them arose from Thornton promoting a testimonial to Mill on his retirement. There was a general wish in the department to make a presentation of this sort, and the clerks quickly subscribed a sum of between fifty and sixty pounds, which they decided to invest in a silver inkstand, designed by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Matthew Digby Wyatt. By some means or other the matter came to Mill's ears, and he went at once to Thornton in a great rage. "I had never before seen him so angry. He hated all such demonstrations, he said, and was quite resolved not to be made the subject of them. He was sure they were never altogether genuine or spontaneous." Thornton endeavoured, but in vain, to induce him to change his mind; and the subscribers found themselves in a dilemma, as the inkstand had already been ordered. In the end the difficulty was got over by keeping the present for some months and sending it quietly to Mill's house at Blackheath. Even then, says Thornton, it was only through the persuasions of Miss Helen Taylor that Mill was induced to abstain from returning it.

XV

THE STAFF IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

FROM James and John Mill to the average East India House clerk is a great drop; yet, after dwelling on the careers of those two remarkable chiefs, it may not be altogether amiss to say, before concluding, a few words about the rank and file. In so doing, however, all dryasdust details will be omitted. My purpose is only to give a general idea of the life of the Office, together with a few anecdotes to emphasize its lighter side.

Clerkships were filled by the nomination of the Directors, who could thus provide for a relative or friend, reward a deserving member of the staff who had a son to start in life, or gratify a political supporter. Selling a nomination was specially guarded against and practically never occurred, though in the *Times* of September 20, 1802, will be found an offer of a hundred guineas to any lady or gentleman procuring the advertiser a post in one of the public offices or in the East India House. It is true that rumours were long current of corrupt bargains of this sort, and in 1809 the matter was investigated by a Committee of the House of Commons, with the result that the Directors were completely vindicated. Once nominated, there was no gauntlet to be run in the shape of a searching examination into educational or other qualifications. As we have already seen, testimonials had to be produced, and there

appears to have been some opening for the head of a department to impose an elementary test and to object to an obviously unsuitable candidate; but in practice nomination by a Director was the one thing needful.

Naturally there was a great deal of competition for these appointments, which assured the nominee not only a good income for a moderate amount of work, but also a handsome retiring allowance. The Company had always been fairly liberal in the latter respect, and a return, dated May, 1793, shows that £15,000 was then being paid annually under this head. More than half the amount, however, went to persons unconnected with the home service; and the establishment of a regular system of pensions for the East India House staff dated only from the Act of 1813, which, following the precedent set three years earlier in the case of the Government offices, empowered the East India Company to grant pensions to all its clerical staff. The scale was a liberal one. A clerk retiring under sixty, owing to infirmity of mind or body, might be granted a third of his salary and emoluments if he had served ten years, one-half if he had served between ten and twenty, and two-thirds if he had over that number to his credit. For those over sixty, the proportion was two-thirds, with a minimum of fifteen years' service. At sixty-five a clerk who had been forty years in the employment of the Company could claim three-fourths of his pay as a retiring allowance; while, if he succeeded in completing fifty years' service, he was granted full pay for the rest of his days. As the age of admission was low, many of the clerks were able to earn the highest rate of pension, and naturally they were in most cases eager to do so. It is said that Peter Auber, who was Secretary from 1829 to 1836, entered

the Office at sixteen, quitted it at sixty-six on a pension of £2000 a year, and lived until he was ninety-six, thus drawing from the Company £60,000 in the shape of pension, besides what he had received as pay during his long period of service.

There is a story—how true I cannot say—of a clerk who absolutely refused to retire, though offered the usual terms. His superannuation was decreed by the Court of Directors, he was bowed out of the office, and another clerk took over his seat and his duties. But he appeared next morning as usual, occupied a stool that happened to be vacant, and sent a polite message to the head of the department that he was in attendance and ready to perform any duties that might be required of him. This course he followed day after day, ignoring all remonstrances ; and, according to the story, the Directors at last, unwilling to expel him by force, cancelled their former resolution and permitted him to resume his post.

Salary increments, at least in the latter days, were regular and substantial. Influence, however, was a useful auxiliary, even in these matters. The tale is told of a young clerk who found himself being promoted with unexpected rapidity. This good fortune he was too modest to ascribe to any special merits of his own ; while he well knew that he had no influential friend, either in the House or out of it, who could thus have helped him. Applying, however, the logical processes so clearly expounded to the world by an eminent colleague, he discovered that each time he moved, the clerk next below him moved also. This explained the mystery ; for the latter individual happened to be the son of the Secretary, and that official, being naturally unwilling to show his hand too openly, had hit upon the expedient of advocating the claims of a stranger,

taking care at the same time that his boy obtained the post thus vacated.

As regards the amount of work done, there was great difference at various times and in various departments ; but no doubt in some branches matters were taken pretty easily. One who was at the East India House in its latter days told me that on his appointment he was assigned a seat next to an old gentleman who triumphantly exhibited a dilapidated quill which, he declared, was the only pen he had ever used or meant to use while in the Office. The lines ascribed to Peacock (though not to be taken too seriously) also represent the day's labour as extremely light:

> "From ten to eleven, ate a breakfast for seven;
> From eleven to noon, to begin 'twas too soon;
> From twelve to one asked: 'What's to be done?'
> From one to two found nothing to do;
> From two to three began to foresee
> That from three to four would be a damned bore."

In one branch of the work, at all events, considerable industry was shown. Owing to the necessity of satisfying the Board of Control on every point connected with the draft dispatches submitted to that body, each draft was accompanied by full copies of all documents referred to therein ; and although, by an arrangement made in 1830, the Indian authorities supplied transcripts of the consultations, etc., cited in their letters, there still remained a large amount of copying to be done at the East India House. This was mostly a matter of piecework, on a liberal scale of payment ; and by moderate industry even a new hand could earn a salary of £250 or £300 a year at such a task. These appointments were consequently much sought after, and many men who afterwards rose to good posts in the Company's service commenced by humbly copying out

in a fair round hand long extracts from the voluminous documents that poured into the East India House from beyond the seas.

Besides direct emoluments there were many perquisites and privileges, though these were gradually lopped off as time went on. At one period there were free breakfasts for early arrivals ; [1] but this was abolished, as regards the bulk of the staff, by the reforms of 1834,[2] two biscuits being served out daily instead. The higher officials retained until the end the privilege of requisitioning tea, coffee, or other refreshments at their pleasure ; and, as already noted, John Stuart Mill made a regular practice of breakfasting at the office. The Directors from the earliest times had lunched or dined at the expense of the Company whenever official business could be made an excuse ; and their banquets at the London Tavern in Bishopsgate Street on state occasions were long remembered for their lavishness, costing at times over £300 each. These expenses were cut down in 1834, when it was decided that " the practice of having dinners at the taverns for the members of the Court on Court Days be discontinued ; that the refreshment usually provided in the House on

[1] This had apparently developed from an earlier practice of allowing the clerks to have tea (then an expensive beverage) in the mornings. The system led to abuses, and on March 2, 1757, the Court ordered that, " as several of the clerks are observed to waste an unreasonable time in drinking tea in the forenoon, to the delay of the business in their offices, it be referr'd to the Committee of the House to . . . give such direction as they shall think proper to prevent the abuse of the Court's indulgence in their allowance of tea " ; with the result that ten o'clock in the morning was fixed upon as the latest time for supplying tea. Again in January 10, 1770, it was " resolved that no officer or clerk in the house or warehouses be allowed tea in the kitchen after ten o'clock in the forenoon."

[2] A Mrs. Trotter, who had been accustomed to supply the milk and cream, promptly applied to the Company for compensation for loss of business consequent upon this retrenchment ; but whether she got any satisfaction is not recorded.

those days be continued: and that the Chairman be authorized to provide occasional entertainments at an expence not exceeding £2000 per annum, as a compliment from the Court to their officers, the public servants, and others who may have claims to this mark of attention." Notwithstanding this limitation, the Company's dinners continued to be both expensive and frequent, and an invitation to its board was very generally welcomed by the recipient. Referring to the London Tavern banquets, Sir John Kaye wrote, in a charming article contributed to the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1867, that "no better dinners were ever given"; and he added that once a year the Company "had a select party at Mr. Lovegrove's tavern on the banks of the Thames, by Blackwall, which were among the pleasantest festivities of the season."

The Directors, by the way, had in other respects a rather enviable lot. The work was not particularly onerous, and although the pay was only moderate (£300 for an ordinary Director, with an extra £200 each for the Chairman and Deputy) the prestige and the patronage, to say nothing of many indirect advantages, made the position one to be eagerly sought. The value of the patronage it was of course difficult to measure, as any attempt to obtain a monetary equivalent was strictly forbidden; but estimates ranged from about £5000 to £8000 per annum for each Director. Naturally, when an opportunity occurred there were many aspirants for such a post; but vacancies were not numerous. Although by the Charter six of the Directors had to be changed annually, and no one was permitted to hold office for more than four years at a time, the appointment was practically for life. It was always understood that although, when his four years were up, a Director must necessarily stand out for twelve months, his name

would remain on the "House List" and, at the end of that period, he would be brought back again by the united votes of the other Directors and their friends, added to those he could himself command. The Bank of England, by the way, still circulates annually a "House List" of proposed Directors, and these are elected as a matter of course.

Naturally, some of these important gentlemen were inclined to be pompous and self-assertive. I have heard of one of the East India House messengers having his hat knocked off his head by a wrathful Director whom he had unwittingly passed in a dark corridor of the building without recognizing, and therefore without saluting him; and others of higher rank than messengers were expected to show great deference to these exalted personages. In the minutes of the Committee of Shipping for 1809 (and again in 1816) one may read the instructions given to the officers of the Company's ship as to the costume to be worn when visiting the East India House. If summoned to "attend the Court," the commander must don his full dress uniform; if his business were merely to wait upon the Committee, he might appear in undress. It was considerately added that, in the event of his being called first before the Court and then before the Committee, he should wear full dress on both occasions. Apparently the clerk who drafted the circular feared that, unless he was thus explicit, he might some day come upon a portly captain hurriedly changing in the passage from full to undress uniform.

Military officers had, of course, to be as punctilious in these matters as their naval brethren; and on Court days the corridor must have been bright with scarlet and blue. In addition to attending upon the Court as a whole, every

civil and military servant of the Company, upon first appointment or when at home on leave, made a point of waiting upon the Director to whom he owed his nomination, and also upon any others to whom he could procure an introduction. One young cadet was greatly puzzled to find all his attempts to interview "his Director" of no avail: Mr. So-and-so was always "out." Growing desperate at his want of success, he consulted a comrade of maturer years, who solved the mystery at once. It was useless, he said, to inquire of the messenger whether a Director was in, unless you happened to have half a crown visible in your hand at the same moment. If you observed this precaution, you stood a fair chance of a favourable reply; but otherwise, the question would invariably be answered in the negative.

What would these dignified Directors have said had any one reminded them that their predecessors had on one occasion "had the brokers in"? Yet this was actually the case. The incident occurred early in 1784. The Company had failed to submit the requisite accounts showing how certain sums advanced to them by the Exchequer to defray the charge of the troops serving in the East Indies had been disposed of; and thereupon some Government official obtained the issue of a Writ of Distringas, under which the bailiffs duly took possession of the East India House. The matter, of course, was quickly put right, and the officers were withdrawn; but the Directors were furious at the "indignity" and demanded an inquiry into the conduct of the official who issued the warrant. What the result was, history has failed to record.

Perhaps there was some excuse for the high opinion of their position entertained by the Directors. They were men of wealth and good standing, and the power they

wielded in all matters relating to India was great. More especially was this true of the Chairman, to whom fell in general the initiative in deciding the line to be taken in all matters of importance. Of the influence of these gentlemen at critical moments the historians of the Company have scarcely taken sufficient note. The late Mr. Innes Shand, in his *Days of the Past*, recalls the astonishment with which, at a shooting party in Scotland, he heard one of the party mention quietly at lunch that "his mind was made up: that the Viceroy must come back: and that he was ready to carry the war into the enemy's camp." "He spoke," continues Mr. Shand, "as if he had the directorate in his pocket; and I verily believe he had, for he was a man of no ordinary sagacity and of indomitable will." The name of this Chairman is not given; but clearly the reference is to John Shepherd and to his recall of Lord Ellenborough. We know that both Queen Victoria and the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Peel) strongly disapproved of this step; but they were powerless in the matter, and back the Governor-General came, at the bidding of that quiet Scotsman. Earlier still, Charles Grant—another Scotsman, also of humble parentage—attained an even wider influence. He was a Director for practically thirty years, and Chairman three times; while his ascendancy over his colleagues was so complete that, as Sir James Stephen tells us, he was "regarded at the commencement of the nineteenth century as the real ruler of the rulers of the East, the Director of the Directors." It was Grant who opposed the grandiose schemes of the Marquess Wellesley, just as his distant predecessor, Laurence Sulivan, had opposed the policy of Clive. Other outstanding figures in the list of Chairmen were Sir George Colebrooke (now remembered chiefly for the financial

crash that overwhelmed his banking house): Henry St. George Tucker, a very distinguished member of the Company's civil service: Sir Richard Jenkins, long a "Political" in India: and Sir Francis Baring, the eminent financier.

The clerks of the East India House belonged to all grades of society—from the son of a tradesman who had made himself useful to a Director in a country constituency to the son of a Vice-Chancellor. The majority, however, belonged distinctly to the well-to-do classes, and were naturally inclined to share in all the follies and extravagancies of the "man about town." There is a tradition that the Directors once issued an order that none of "the gentlemen on the Home Establishment" should appear at the office with powdered hair or in top-boots; but later on—though the majority of the clerks restricted themselves to sober black—some of the younger men displayed a pretty fancy in dress. One individual is said to have worn such wonderful neck-cloths that men came from all parts of the House to gaze upon them. The whim of another took the direction of magnificent tips to the messengers, with the result that his entry and exit were accompanied with such attentions that passers-by judged him to be the Chairman or a prominent Director at the very least. Sport in all its forms had many devotees; and some of the clerks kept dogs in their official rooms. A certain individual went further still, for he brought his pistols with him, and relieved the tedium of his duties by using a mantelpiece at the end of the room as a target. This speedily produced a complaint to the Secretary from one of the clerks seated near the said mantelpiece; whereupon the marksman was given a commission in a cavalry regiment and sent to India.

The changing fashions of the day were, of course, reflected at the East India House. In the early years of the century volunteering was the rage and many a smart uniform was to be seen in Leadenhall Street. Then, under the influence of Lord Byron, long hair, loose collars, and a poetic melancholy became the tone of the more literary members of the staff. Pugilism in turn claimed the allegiance of the sporting element; many an encounter took place after hours in the House itself, and old members of the staff dwelt lovingly on the achievements of "Ned" Peacock (son of the novelist), who, in addition to being a renowned oarsman, once fought a professional bruiser and came out of the contest with credit. When the Crimean War made beards the fashion, a number of the East India House men at once ceased to use their razors. Their unclerical appearance caused much stir among the more conservative members of the staff; and one sportive gentleman took advantage of the situation to play a practical joke on the hairy ones. An order of the Court of Directors, written in due form and authenticated by what appeared to be a genuine signature, was circulated in the office, forbidding the wearing of beards or moustaches during official hours. Consternation seized the devotees of the new fashion; for they must either disobey the Directors or sacrifice their much prized adornments. There was much indignant questioning of the right of the authorities to make such a restriction, and some desperate talk of resisting this tyranny was only stopped by the discovery that the order was a hoax. The author of the joke, however, received a severe wigging from the authorities for his temerity in using the august name of the Court for so frivolous a purpose.

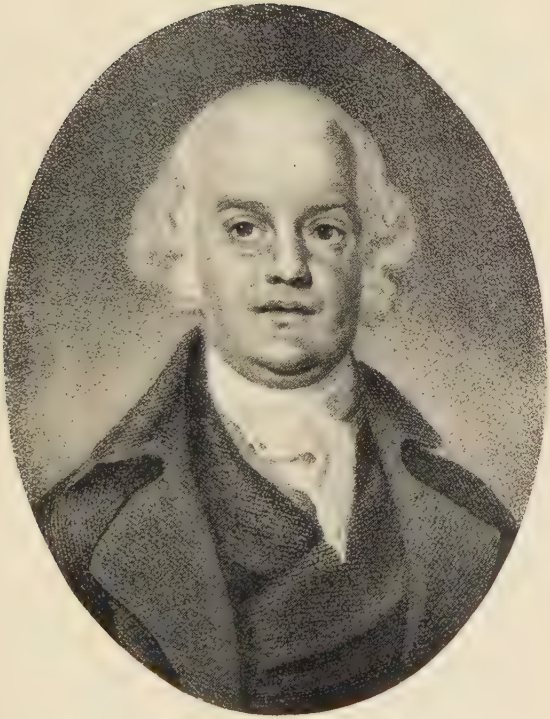
Those were the days of the practical joke; and, needless

to say, that most annoying form of humour was much in favour at the East India House. Many of the staff came up to town on horseback (Lamb once remarked that he supposed he was the only man in England who had never worn boots and never mounted a horse) ; and it was considered an exquisite pleasantry to get hold of a colleague's steed and either sell it or put it out to bait in some obscure livery stables. Even in the office itself the roughest horse-play went on. In 1811 Crabb Robinson found Lamb half-blinded by some ink which had been thrown into his face by his friend Wadd. Inkpots—and indeed anything else that was handy—were freely hurled about, and one had to be continually on the watch for such playful attentions. In the case of large rooms, which were partitioned off into what were known as " compounds " (" a compound," explained Lamb, " is a collection of simples "), an equally distressing form of humour was prevalent. A heavy ruler was flung high into the air, to fall perchance on an unsuspecting head in the distance. For this there was no redress, as it was almost impossible to discover the quarter from which the missile had started.

An amusing anecdote of this period was narrated to me by a member of the staff who died several years ago. One day the Accountant-General, in returning to his room, caught the sound of distant music. Following up the trail, he discovered that it came from one of the rooms under his control ; and, anxious to know what new prank his young men were engaged in, he stepped to the door and listened intently. From inside came a ludicrous drawl in imitation of a clergyman reading the service, and at intervals " Amen " burst forth in full plagal harmony. But as he caught the words a satisfied smile came upon the Accountant-General's face ; he knew that the occupants of

the room were " reading over " the Bengal schedule, and that the musical accompaniments were mere devices to take off the monotony of the task. So he quietly retreated to his room without disturbing the harmony.

Yet if frivolity had many disciples, there were others in the House who cherished higher ambitions and devoted their nights (and no doubt part of their official days as well) to the service of literature. In this respect the Company's staff during the last century of its existence had a really remarkable record. Putting aside those whose works dealt mainly with India and were in a sense professional—Orme, Bruce, Auber, and Kaye in the domain of history; Halhed and the two Librarians, Wilkins and Wilson, in that of Oriental learning; Alexander Dalrymple in nautical matters; Edward Thornton in both geography and history—we have still a noteworthy list. Lamb, the two Mills, and Peacock must be placed in the first rank; next, perhaps, may come John Hoole and James Cobb (Secretary from 1814 to 1818 and author of many plays very popular at the time); and below them a number of lesser men not yet entirely forgotten. Such were Thomas Fisher and Thomas Rundall, the former of whom devoted himself to antiquarian research, and the latter to the editing of early voyages; Walter Wilson, who wrote on Dissenting Churches and the life of Daniel Defoe; Peter Solomon Dupuy, who (like Wilson) was a friend of Lamb, and was helped by him in *The Sentimental Tablets of the Good Pamphile*, a translation from the French of M. Gorjy; Moffat James Horne, author of *The Adventures of Naufragus*, describing his own experiences at sea and on shore in the East; Macvey Napier, who published the correspondence of his father, the well-known editor of the *Edinburgh Review*; Horace Grant, a special friend of John Stuart



JAMES COBB

Mill and the author of several educational manuals; and William Thomas Thornton, already mentioned as another friend of Mill, who thought highly of him and his works. Thornton not only wrote on such subjects as over-population, peasant proprietors, and Indian public works, but also published three volumes of poetry of mediocre quality.[1] Another poet-clerk, Sir John Kaye tells us, attempted an epic illustrative of the life and death of John Company, to which he appended a series of notes in Latin explaining the allusions.

To these literary celebrities we may add the names of two distinguished clerics who started their careers by a period of service at the East India House. One of these was George Trevor, who, after contributing to *Blackwood's Magazine* while still in the employment of the Company, resigned his post, took Holy Orders, and went to Madras as a chaplain, ending as Canon of York Cathedral. The other, William Grant Broughton, had a still more remarkable career. From 1807–14 (not 1812, as stated in the *Dictionary of National Biography*) he was a clerk in the Treasurer's Department, ranking just above Lamb's friend Pulham. Then Broughton tendered his resignation and betook himself to Cambridge University, where he was Sixth Wrangler in 1818. He was ordained in that year, and ten years later was induced by the Duke of Wellington to accept the post of Archdeacon of New South Wales. Thenceforward he devoted his life to the development of Church work in Australia, making extensive tours in that country, and zealously seeking to raise funds at home for the

[1] The appearance of one of these was the occasion of a happy jest, for the due comprehension of which it must be premised that Thornton was about the tallest man in the building. "Did you know that Thornton was a poet?" one of the staff asked a colleague. "H'm," was the reply, "I always knew he was a long fellow."

endowment of a bishopric. As the result, he was in 1836 consecrated at Lambeth as the first Bishop of Australia; and when in 1847 the bishopric was subdivided, he became the first Bishop of Sydney and Metropolitan of Australasia. He returned to England five years later, but the fatigues of the voyage proved too much for him, and he died in February, 1853. His tomb is in Canterbury Cathedral.

And here these random notes on the East India House and its occupants must come to an end. I should be sorry if my jottings left the impression that the East India House clerks were a set of lazy and incompetent eccentrics. Quite the opposite was the case. During the last seventy years of the Company's existence many weighty testimonies were given to the ability and industry with which its work was carried on; while, as we have seen, among its staff were many really notable men. It may be averred with confidence that, in point of organization and efficient discharge of all requisite duties, the East India House staff was considerably ahead of the public departments of the day; while as to the spirit that animated the Company and its servants in general, both in India and at home, no better testimonial can be cited than that of James Mill—written, be it remembered, before he had any personal connexion with the Company, and while he was in many matters its stern critic:

"To communicate the whole of the impression made upon a mind which has taken a survey of the government of India by the East India Company more completely through the whole field of its action than was ever taken before, and which has not spared to bring forward into the same light the unfavourable and the favourable points, it may be necessary to state, and this I conceive to be the most convenient occasion for stating, That in regard to *intention*

I know no government, either in past or present times, that can be placed equally high with that of the East India Company; That I can hardly point out an occasion on which the schemes they have adopted, and even the particular measures they pursued, were not by themselves considered as conducive to the welfare of the people whom they governed; That I know no government which has on all occasions shown so much of a disposition to make sacrifices of its own interests to the interests of the people whom it governed, and which has in fact made so many and such important sacrifices; That if the East India Company have been so little successful in ameliorating the practical operation of their government, it has been owing chiefly to the disadvantage of their situation, distant a voyage of several months from the scene of action, and to that imperfect knowledge which was common to them with almost all their countrymen. . . . And that, lastly, in the highly important point of the servants, or subordinate agents of government, there is nothing in the world to be compared with the East India Company, whose servants, as a body, have not only exhibited a portion of talent which forms a contrast with that of the ill-chosen instruments of other governments, but have, except in some remarkable instances, as that of the loan transactions with the Nabob of Arcot, maintained a virtue which, under the temptations of their situation, is worthy of the highest applause" (Mill's *History of British India*, ed. Wilson, vol. vi. p. 13).

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